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"BANG!" WENT THE PISTOL AND SIX LEGS AND SIX ARMS BEGAN TO WORK LIKE PISTONS.

—Page 151.

FRANK ARMSTRONG AT QUEENS

By MATTHEW M. COLTON

AUTHOR OF

"Frank Armstrong at College," "Frank Armstrong's Vacation," "Frank Armstrong, Drop Kicker," "Frank Armstrong, Captain of the Nine," "Frank Armstrong's Second Term."

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	FRANK ENCOUNTERS A BULLY	5
II.	AN AFTERNOON OF FOOTBALL	18
III.	JIMMY GETS IN THE GAME	29
IV.	FRANK HAS A NEW NAME	41
V.	CAPTURED BY THE ENEMY	51
VI.	HAZING AND THE WATER CURE	64
VII.	SCHOOL SPIRIT AND SCHOOL INFLUENCES	76
VIII.	QUEEN'S MEETS BARROWS AT FOOTBALL	88
IX.	WHAT CAME OF A TUMBLE	102
X.	FRANK SPRINGS A SURPRISE	112
XI.	A PROSPECTIVE PUPIL	123
XII.	A TRY-OUT ON THE TRACK	134
XIII.	LEARNING TO RUN THE HUNDRED	145
XIV.	A MYSTERIOUS APPEARANCE	156
XV.	FRANK WINS HONORS ON THE TRACK	170
XVI.	WARWICK INVADES QUEEN'S	182
XVII.	THE GREAT FOOTBALL GAME	194

39 X 1091

CHAPTER		PAGE
XVIII.	Gamma Tau Receives a Shock	211
XIX.	An Encounter with the Mystery	224
XX.	A Contest at the Gymnasium	241
XXI.	The Loss of a Rink	252
XXII.	A Heroic Rescue	265
XXIII.	A Challenge from Warwick	279
XXIV.	A Gift and a Theft	294
XXV.	The Ice Carnival	305

Frank Armstrong at Queen's.

CHAPTER I.

FRANK ENCOUNTERS A BULLY.

"Can you tell me how to get to Warren Hall, please?"

The question was addressed by a slender youth of fourteen to a group of lads lolling on the grass at the foot of a great elm in the yard of Queen's School.

"Well, I guess the best way would be to walk, unless you have an automobile," was the flippant answer of a freckle-faced and aggressive member of the group, who, lying with his hands under his head, gazed up at the questioner with an impish grin. The rest of the crowd laughed loudly at the sally.

"I mean," said the new-comer, visibly embar-

rassed with this unkindly reception, "in which direction is Warren Hall?"

"Follow your nose and your two big toes, kid, and you'll get there all right," was the rude response from the self-appointed guide, and at this several of the recumbent youths rolled around on the ground with laughter. It was great, this exhibition of wit. Chip Dixon considered himself brighter than the morning sun, and through a certain strength of his own held sway over his satellites, some of whom were with him this particular afternoon.

The boy asking for information, at the second rebuff looked the speaker coolly in the eye. His embarrassment had gone now, and in its place came a look of disdain. He threw his head back.

"I asked for Warren Hall because I'm going there, and I'm not sure which one it is, but this smart fellow," indicating Chip, "doesn't have sense enough to answer a straight question. Can anyone tell me?" He cast his eye around the group. A look of amazement that a new boy should dare to cross words with this rough and ready fire-eater, spread over the faces of several of them, and a titter ran around, for Chip was not over well liked in the school.

Before anyone had time to answer, Chip himself sprang to his feet with clenched fists. He liked to say sharp things, but like many others, young and old, he could not stand his own medicine, and the titter angered him no less than the cool looking boy who had drawn it forth.

"Smart, am I?" he yelled, rushing up to the new-comer. "I'll show you whether I'm smart or not," and he pushed his face up close to that of the new boy, who held his ground bravely in the rush of the fellow who evidently meant fight. In an instant the two were surrounded.

"Ow! ow!" yelled Chip, just at the moment he appeared to be ready to land his fist on the unoffending boy, "ow! ow! I'll kill you for that," and he grabbed one of his feet and danced around on the other in agony. The heavy suit case, which the newcomer carried had been dropped on the toes of Chip's thin pumps, and must have hurt cruelly. And it looked as if it had been dropped intentionally.

"I'll pay you for that, you fresh kid," and Chip made another rush.

"Cheese it, Chip, here's Parks. Cut it out."

Chip subsided quickly, assumed an air of easy indifference, and began to talk with those of his

cronies nearest to him as if nothing had happened.

Mr. Robert Parks, the assistant master of the school, and a martinet for discipline, was swinging rapidly down the walk, unaware that anything out of the ordinary was taking place. He was a young man in appearance, perhaps not over thirty-five, but he had trained for the army, and showed it in his bearing. A railroad accident had deprived him of his left arm, and as army service was impossible for him, he took up the work of teaching. He nodded pleasantly to the boys as he approached them, and then stopped suddenly.

"Hello, Armstrong," he said with surprise, as he saw the strange lad standing there, "I was just going across to your room. Been talking with your father on the telephone and I promised him I'd see you settled all right. He said that he had been unable to come up with you, but described you so well I knew you at once. Glad you fell in with friends, though," added Mr. Parks, glancing around the circle of faces.

"They are not friends of mine. I was just asking for directions when you came up," answered Frank, for the new boy was none other

than Frank Armstrong. He had made up his mind to enter Queen's in the fall term after all, and as his health was so robust owing to the great vacation he had had at Seawall and in the Everglades, his mother and father offered no objections, and so here he was faring forth alone.

"They have given you a room in Warren Hall, I believe, haven't they?" said Mr. Parks.

"Yes, sir; eighteen is the number."

"Alone?"

"No, a fellow named Gleason is with me, from New York State, I think. I don't know him."

"Well, come along," said Mr. Parks, and led the way in the direction of Frank's future domicile.

"So that's Frank Armstrong, is it?" growled Chip, still with his feathers ruffled from the setback he had received. "I've heard of him and he's what I call a pretty fresh guy. If old Parks hadn't showed up when he did I would have knocked a little freshness out of him."

"He wasn't as fresh as you were," broke in little Willie Patterson. "He asked a civil question and you began to be funny before any of us had time to answer. And, besides, it mightn't have been so easy to knock what you say is

'freshness' out of him. I notice he didn't back up much when you rushed him. Was the suit case heavy?" he added mockingly. Willie's diminutive size made him bold, and, besides, wasn't his sturdy but slow-witted roommate, A. B. C. Sinclair, commonly called Alphabet, there to fight his battles for him in case his sharp tongue ran him into difficulties?

Dixon knew he was at a disadvantage, shut his jaws tight and said nothing, but if his look meant anything it meant that a heavy hand was to fall on Frank at the first opportunity.

"That's the fellow the papers have been talking about. Call him the 'great swimmer boy of Milton' because he got in a race with the champion Darnell down in Florida somewhere," sneered one of Chip's cronies, anxious to find favor in the eyes of his boss.

"Swimmer! My eye," grunted Chip. "I could tie one hand behind me and beat him out." Chip boasted of being something of a swimmer himself, and he could not believe that the slender boy, whom he had tried to jolly and later to scare, had the strength to swim against him. "If I get him in the water some time I'll drown him."

"I don't know about that," said Willie. "I think he's all right, and I'm going up to his room and tell him we are not all grouches like you are," and picking himself up he steered rapidly for Warren Hall to square matters with his own conscience. The bearing of the new boy had won him completely.

Without a hint of the storm of injured feelings left behind, and consequently unheeding, Mr. Parks walked rapidly with Frank across the school quadrangle to Warren, and shortly arrived at the quaint old doorway of the second entry.

"Warren was the first of the buildings of Queen's," said Mr. Parks as they trudged along. "It used to be the whole school when there were only about twenty-five boys. That was fifty years ago, but as the number of pupils increased these other buildings were added, and we have room now for a hundred and eighty boys altogether."

"Yes, I know the school has been growing. Father says it's the best in the state."

"Well, I think there are none better, even though our friends of the Warwick school up the river put on airs occasionally," said Mr. Parks.

"That's Russell Hall across the north end of the yard where the recitation rooms are," he continued, "and the school library and the social hall; and at the north end of Warren there, is the chapel. Just across from Warren is Honywell where the school officers are. Doctor Hobart, the head of the school—you know him, of course—has his quarters in Warren. So you'll have to be on your best behavior." And Parks smiled down on the lad to whom he was much attracted.

They were now at the foot of the entry where was located No. 18. Mr. Parks plunged up the stairs and Frank followed at his heels, taking time to note the queer old crooked stairway, the newel post which was nothing more than a round block of wood carved with many initials, and the hand rail scarred with many a knife line where the ambitious initial cutters had dug deep to impress their fame on succeeding generations. The painted plaster of one side of the stairway was scrawled with initials, impromptu verses and rude sketches, caricatures evidently of school characters.

"Here we are," said Frank's guide, stopping

before a door on the second landing. "Let's see if Gleason's in," and he tapped lightly. There was no response, and turning the knob he stepped within. Frank followed at his heels, and entered what was to be his new home for a number of months at least.

"Well, I wouldn't say Gleason was much of a hand at keeping things tidy," observed Mr. Parks. "Maybe you can help him. I wish you luck. If I can assist in any way, just call on me. I have an office in Russell Hall, ground floor, first entry, and my office hours are printed on a slip on the door. Come and see me when you get settled. Good day."

"Good day, sir, and thank you for your kindness," replied Frank, and the door shut.

Parks was right when he said Gleason was not a tidy housekeeper, for the place was in heaped up disorder. Evidently Gleason had not yet succeeded in settling, himself. His clothes were scattered around the room, and mateless shoes bestrewed the floor. A laundry box lay tipped on the window seat with half its contents on the cushion and half on the floor, and the center table was filled with a promiscuous assortment of books, writing materials, a tennis racket,

and several tennis balls reposing on a battered flannel cap. Out of this crazy jumble on the table, the drop light rose like a mushroom-topped lighthouse. The fine fireplace was piled full of crumpled papers.

Frank's own things had been tumbled into his bedroom, and there lay his first work of straightening things out. He was busily engaged in setting things in order when there came a tap on the outer door, and following the tap, without waiting on ceremony, a hand pushed it open. Frank turned and saw his visitor, noticing at once that it was one of the group he had encountered a little while before.

"You're Frank Armstrong," said the newcomer.

"That's my name."

"Well, my name's Patterson, Wee Willie they call me because I'm so big." The manner was friendly and genial.

Frank grinned. "Glad to see you," he said as Wee Willie stuck out his hand.

The visitor continued: "I happened to be in that bunch of fellows this afternoon, and I came up to apologize for Queen's, and to tell you that

Chip Dixon made me sick. He didn't speak for the school when he cut into you this afternoon so heavy."

"Who is he?"

"He's in my class, a Junior, and belongs to the society that thinks it runs this school, but he's a big bluff, if anyone should ask you about it. He's got most of us scared to death because he's so handy with his tongue and his fist, but it tickled me to death to see you stand up to him this afternoon. Christopher is his name, but 'Chip' is a nickname they've given him."

"I couldn't do anything else, could I?"

"No, of course not, but it is going to put you in bad with Gamma Tau all right. They are awfully clannish."

"Do you belong?" asked Frank.

"No, they didn't think enough of me to give me a bid, but I don't care. I don't like the bunch they took from our class, and I would rather be outside looking in, than inside looking out. Gamma Tau used to be looked up to, but lately they have stopped giving the election for merit. It's all politics now, and the master, old Pop Eye Hobart, said he would abolish it if they

didn't stop their monkeying and get down to first principles."

"Well, I'm sure I don't care whether I get an election or not, if it's that kind of a society. I'd rather stay out."

"The trouble is that the society runs the athletics of this school," continued the diminutive oracle, "and it's a hard job to make any team if you don't have the Gamma Tau pin. If you do have it, no matter how rank you may be, you're IT with a large capital I."

"Then that's what's the matter with your teams up here, is it?" queried Frank, who had kept an eye on Queen's school athletics for some time, and knew that victories were rarities.

"Hit it first time, right in the eye. We are punky to the state of rottenness, and we'll remain that way till the Gamma gets its head knocked off, and the best athletes in the school get a chance. As it is now, the best we have don't try.

"Well, I must be off," said Wee Willie, as he slid from the window seat. "I just wanted to tell you we're not all like Chip Dixon. He's a crab and walks backward and doesn't know it.

Ta ta, see you later," and the Wee One swung himself out of the door and clattered down the stairs, leaving Frank to straighten out his effects as best he might, and puzzle on the first tangle of life at school in which he found himself.

CHAPTER II.

AN AFTERNOON OF FOOTBALL.

Frank had succeeded, after some hard work, in getting order out of chaos, and was in the act of unpacking his suit case when there was a thundering clatter on the stairs, and Jimmy, followed more leisurely by Lewis, broke into the room without even the ceremony of knocking.

"Well, if it isn't my old eel from Seawall," shouted Jimmy boisterously. "We thought you were never coming."

"You certainly took your time," said Lewis. "You were only going to be a week late and here half the month is gone and half the football schedule's been played. Give an account of yourself."

"Well, you see, they weren't prepared to have me go till the winter term, and it takes father a long time to change his mind after he gets it made up to one thing. But mother and I got

at him and proved to him that I was as fit as a race horse and there would be no more breaking down. So here I am."

"And about time, too. You're going out for the football team, I suppose," said Jimmy. "You see the school isn't a very big one, and everyone who is heavy enough takes a try at it. Even Lewis here is on the squad."

"Sure thing," nodded Lewis from the window seat. "I didn't intend to try for it, but the captain sent over one day and said it wouldn't be fair to the school if I hid all my talent under a bushel."

"Yes, and it's been hid under a sweater ever since. Lewis is a fine ornament to any sideline," said Jimmy.

"Are you on the team, Jimmy?"

"O, no. I'm just on the squad doing what they tell me to. I got a chance yesterday afternoon to play tackle, but I'm about as much at home playing up in the line as a tadpole in a haymow. The tackle opposite me played horse with me. And the coach glared at me savagely whenever the play went over me, and that was every time, I guess."

"Didn't he know you were a back?" asked Frank.

"I ventured to tell him that, but he told me in the most courteous fashion to shut up, and I shut."

"Don't you think you have a chance?"

"About as much chance as I have to be president, which, considering that there are somewhere about ten million possible candidates, is a problem that even Lewis could figure."

"Jimmy hasn't got a chance to make the team, Frank. I haven't been here but three weeks, and it's as plain as the nose on your face that if you haven't a Gamma pin on you, you might as well go way back and be comfortably seated. Tom Harding, the captain, is a Gamma, the manager is a Gamma, and I know for a fact that ten out of the eleven are in the same society."

"It's a regular open and shut game," added Jimmy.

"Isn't there another society here?" inquired Frank. "What's the matter with it?"

"Alpha Beta. It doesn't count," said Lewis contemptuously. "Gamma Tau is the oldest society, and has had things all its own way for

some years. Then some of the fellows, about six years ago, got together and ran in Alpha Beta, and for a little while it made a good fight against its older rival. But as every one was trying for the Gamma, the Alpha got the second run of fellows until now it isn't an honor to belong to it, and the fellows who don't get Gamma turn the other down flat, preferring to have nothing."

"Seems like a chance for a third," observed Frank. "Wonder it hasn't been started."

"No one has the nerve to start it," said Lewis. "They growl and growl at the Gamma like nice little dogs, but they never bite."

"Gee whiz, it's nearly practice time," cried Jimmy. "We go out from four to five every day, and we've just time to make it. Stop your prinking, and come along. You can sit on the bleachers and see football as she is played by Lewis and me."

Frank, nothing loth, banged shut the suit case, and putting on his cap was soon scampering with the two friends toward the playground.

Queen's school playground was the gift of a wealthy graduate of the school who had kept his interest in the old place. Its equipment was most complete. The playground lay to the west of the

line of school buildings,—gridiron, diamond, and boat-house, and beyond the latter the tennis courts, all models in themselves, and ample in size for the needs of the school for many years to come.

Nature had done her share in the first place with a tract of land almost as level as a floor and some thirty acres in extent, but the hand of man completed the job, and the playground was one of the show places of Queen's School. Its rather low level, as it bordered on the Wampaug river, insured a greenness of verdure no matter how dry the season. Trained ground keepers kept the place like a gentleman's garden. Stands which would accommodate several thousand people were ranged on both sides of the gridiron, and a much smaller but prettily covered stand gave ample room for spectators at the diamond. The boat house was well furnished with canoes, pair oars and gigs, and even boasted a fine cedar eight-oared shell and a heavier eight called a barge. But Queen's rowing had declined in late years, and it had been some time since the shell held a victorious crew. Around the gridiron was the running track, a pretty and well kept cinder path on which the track meets of the

school were held, and where every other year Queen's met Warwick in their annual struggle.

"Isn't she a beauty?" cried Jimmy, waving his hand with a proprietor's sense of ownership over the whole fair prospect, as the boys reached the crest of the little hill behind Warren Hall. The whole of the playground dotted with exercising boys lay open to their view.

It surely was a beauty; and Frank felt his heart swell with pride in the knowledge that he was now a part of it. What worlds there were to conquer here! Would he be able to win his place in these fields?

"I'll do my best," he whispered to himself.

"This is the gymnasium," said Lewis, pointing to a low structure between the gridiron and the diamond. "Let's make tracks. There's the coach now. You go right over to the bleachers, and we'll be dressed on the field in a few minutes. Practice will begin very soon."

They parted, and Frank went on alone. When he reached his seat, a score of fellows, who had dressed early, were tumbling around on the ground like so many kittens, falling on the ball which was being tossed to them by the

coach, big Harry Horton, who at the same time belabored them with words.

"Fenton, you fall on that ball like a hippopotamus; what are you doing, playing leap-frog? That's not the way. Dive for it, and gather it in to you. Try again." Fenton tried again, but with no better success.

"Look,—this way!" And Horton rolled the ball along the ground, sprang after it like a cat, turning slightly sideways in the air, making a little pocket between knees and arms as he flew. When he fetched up, the ball was snugly tucked close to his body in a position which would make it perfectly safe from any attempts by fair or foul tactics.

Fenton was impressed and made another try, doing it a little better.

"Good, now, MacIntosh, make it sure. When you go for the ball don't go in such a great hurry. When you're in so big a hurry you don't know what you're doing; make it safe. Keep your head, even when you leave your feet." Horton had been a great player in his day on one of the big college teams, and had taken up the work of athletic director temporarily at Queen's, where he was greatly liked.

The squad was augmented by fifteen or twenty boys as this preliminary instruction was going on, and practice now began in earnest. Among those in the field, Jimmy took his place. Frank could see that he was skillful at falling on the ball, and that he handled himself like a cat. As he was laughing at some of the attempts of Lewis to corral the rolling ball, a voice alongside cried:

"Hello, Armstrong, why aren't you in the fray?" and turning, Frank saw approaching him Wee Willie Patterson.

"Don't mind if I sit down with you?" said the Wee One cordially.

"Mighty glad if you want to," returned Frank, who had taken a great liking to the diminutive but independent Patterson. "It was lonesome here alone."

"There's your friend of this afternoon, Mr. Chip Dixon, talking with Captain Harding. He's quarterback of the eleven, and a mighty good one at that. He can play the game if he can't do anything else. He pretty near runs the team, too, for Harding is not much more than a figurehead, even though he is a Senior.

"There she goes now. We're going to have a line-up, and a bit of a scrimmage, I guess."

"First and Second elevens," cried Horton from the field, and as they took their positions,—"now make this good. We are only going to have fifteen minutes of it. Second team's ball for the kickoff." Jimmy was not in either line-up, Frank noticed with regret, but thought that maybe he'd get in before the end.

"Bing." Away shot the ball from midfield driven by the sturdy toe of Duncan McLeod's foot. It settled in the arms of the First eleven's full back, twenty-five yards down the field, and that individual came ripping back, tossing the Second's players over like nine-pins, until he had brought the ball back to midfield.

"Peaches, peaches," cried the spectators.

"Line-up, quick," yelled the coach who was acting as coach and referee as well. "You would have gone clear through," he said to the full-back, slapping him on the back as he dodged through behind to take his position at the other end of the line, "if you had used your arm as I told you. Remember it next time."

"Come, now, make it go," barked Dixon, "1—7—33."

There was a quick pass, and Hillard, the left half, had the ball, and with a good interference shot for the right end of the Second's line. The defensive tackle was nicely put out of the play, and the right half cut across and took care of the waiting end. Hillard was quickly past the line and bearing off well to out-distance the defensive half.

"Look at the fool," yelled Wee Willie, "he has left his interference behind him. Morton will nip him. What did I tell you! O, rot, look at that!" Hillard had indeed left his interference, disobeying orders, but he thought he was fast and agile enough to clear the quarterback of the Second team, who was waiting his coming on the 20-yard line, inching over toward the side lines so that the runner would have less ground in which to dodge.

In spite of his plan and his speed, Hillard could not avoid those eager arms of the quarter, and down he went in a whirling tackle. The ball flew from his grasp as he struck the ground, then it bounced crazily around, and finally nestled itself in the arms of Tompkins, the Second's left half who had come across to strengthen his quarter's defense.

Tompkins, seeing his opportunity, was away to the side of the field from which the play had come like the wind, every man Jack of the First eleven having been carried in the direction of Hillard. Before they could bring themselves to a halt, and turn on their tracks, Tompkins had gathered speed. Once a tackle got a hand on him, but he shook it off, and with a clear field carried the ball across the goal line, touched it down behind the posts, and sat there upon it, grinning like a Cheshire cat.

CHAPTER III.

JIMMY GETS IN THE GAME.

"Now, they'll get it for fair," observed the Wee One as the coach went striding down the field, following the scattered members of the First eleven who jogged sulkily down to the goal; and get it they did.

"I'm ashamed of you, Hillard," burst out Horton. "You've been playing two years on this team, and you can't hang onto a ball yet. If any one crosses his fingers in front of you, you lose the ball. Go and sit down." Hillard turned and walked slowly toward the side of the field, with head hanging. He was a good back, but had the fatal habit of fumbling. He was so clever at dodging and so fast on his feet, however, that the coach, knowing well his failing, was still tempted to put him in the line-up,—and, besides, he belonged to the powerful Gamma Tau.

"Tucker, you take Hillard's place, and see if

we can't do something. Here we are, only three weeks from our last game, and you are playing like a perfectly lovely eleven from the Mount Hope Female Seminary. Think a little about the game, and squeeze that ball, PLEASE."

The coach took the ball from Tompkins, and started up the field, the whole crowd of players straggling along behind him, the First eleven sour in face and heavy in step, the Second grinning broadly.

"There, now," said Horton, putting the ball down at midfield again with a good deal more force than was necessary. "Let's have some football. First eleven's ball. Make it go. You've got to carry it from here, don't kick it, carry it. Make it go," and he jumped out of the way as the two lines crashed together.

"That's something like it. Second down, two yards to go. Some more like that."

"Big Dutton carried it that time," said Patterson to Frank. "That big fellow with the light hair. He's the best plunger on the field, but he's something of a bonehead, and he can't remember the signals. Poor Horton has his own worries with him. There he goes again."

"First down," yelled Horton from the field.

"That's going. Squeeze that ball, Dutton. Steady in the line there and keep on side. Wait till the ball is snapped, Burnham. Wait till the ball is snapped—there, what did I tell you?" as Burnham, the right tackle, anticipating the signal, plunged ahead. Little Hopkinson, quarter of the Second, had his hand up and was yelling for the penalty, which he got.

"Now, First team, you've got to make that loss up this time." Harding, the captain, stepped out of his place at guard, in the line, and conferred with Dixon a minute.

"It's going to be a long pass, I'll bet dollars to shoelaces," said the Wee One, as the lines settled down on their toes.

"22—16—34—146," shouted Dixon. There was a quick pass from center, and the quarter, turning half way round, tucked the ball cleverly in the right half's pocketed arms as he went shooting past him. The half ran straight out, seemingly bent on turning in at the first possible moment. But this little ruse was only to draw the fire of the opponents who came charging at him. Then he stopped dead in his tracks, stepped backwards and threw the ball unerringly to the right end who had edged away out toward the

side line at the proper time, entirely unnoticed by the Second backs who had been drawn over. The catch was clearly made, by Campbell, and he was away like a breeze, with no one near him. Hopkinson came up on him hard, a little too hard for safety, and he was easily side-stepped by the fleet-footed end who, though hard pressed, eluded all tackles and carried the ball over. It was a pretty piece of work, and the coach, for once, seemed to be satisfied.

"Now, that's what I call pretty football," exclaimed Frank. "I thought you said this team was no good."

"Well, it isn't," replied Patterson. "Once in a while they can pull a play like that off, but most of the time they make a grand fizzle out of it. They don't seem to have the spirit, somehow. I'll bet they'll flub-dub it yet."

"Good work, good work," said the coach as he took the ball again. "No time for goal-kicking now. First, see what you can do in carrying it through the line. What's the matter, Harper?"

This last remark was directed at the right half on the Second team, who was limping around, having got in the way of one of the First's line-

men, and received a bad tumble in open field while chasing Campbell.

"My old ankle," replied Harper, walking around and wincing every time he touched his foot to the ground. "The one I hurt last week."

"Go and sit down. I'll attend to it after practice; loosen your shoe if it hurts. I want someone to take Harper's place," continued Horton, glancing up and down the row of boys sitting on the side-line. "Hey, you Freshman, what's-your-name," indicating Turner, "get in and play this half."

"Who is that going in?" inquired the Wee One, as Jimmy jumped up and ran onto the field. "Looks like a likely kid."

"He's a friend of mine, Jimmy Turner; he's a Freshman."

"He looks as strong as a bull. Does he know the game?"

"No, not very well, but he's crazy about it, and I'll bet he makes good."

Jimmy took his position, and the next instant he was on the bottom of a pile of bodies and arms and legs. Big Dutton had come through the line, and Jimmy met him with all his force, and stopped him. But there had been a gain.

Again Dutton came ramming through. This time the guard and tackle had opened a hole in the Second's line five feet wide, and Dutton had time to get up some speed before he reached Jimmy, who waited for him. It was a bigger gain this time.

"Come on," yelled the coach, dashing around from behind the attacking eleven. "This Second line isn't doing its work at all. Here you," indicating Jimmy, "don't wait for that back to come through on you, play up to the line, you've got to throw him back. Now again!"

This time the play slammed through the opposite side of the line for three yards to a first down.

"That's more like it now," encouraged Horton. "Show this school that you are good for something. Come on, a few more will take it across!"

This time Dixon sent his catapult at Jimmy's territory. But although the line opened wide enough to admit two like Dutton, Jimmy was in the breach. He sprang hard and low, and carried Dutton's legs right out from under him. It is needless to say that the ball stopped right there.

"Second down, four to go," called out the

coach, not before he had ducked around behind Jimmy and hit him a slap on the back, at the same time giving him an encouraging "Good work, Freshman."

Having respect for the strength of that side of the secondary defense, the play was directed at the other side of center, and when the pile was untangled, the ball lay only a yard from first down, and less than two yards from the goal line.

"Now," yelled Chip Dixon, "we have 'em where we want 'em. Make it go and hang onto the ball, 22—36—19——"

"It's coming through center," yelled little Hopkinson, "back-up, center——"

"Change signals," shouted Chip, and then began to reel off a signal which he meant to have the effect of spreading out the defense, but the acute quarter, now playing close in, whispered to his backs: "It's a fake, it's a fake, the play's coming through center. Look out, look out——"

And through center it came with a vengeance, Dutton carrying the ball, crashing and grinding past the guard and tackle who had not been deceived by the trick of changing signals.

"Keep your feet, keep your feet," yelled Horton, dancing around near the end of the line.

Just when it looked like a certainty that Dutton had cleared the line, the two backs of the Second team, reinforced by the ends who had come around to help, threw themselves at the big back. Jimmy was underneath, and the big fellow came crashing to the ground; with a twist and a wriggling half turn he struck hard right across the goal line, and the ball popped from beneath his arm into plain view. In an instant there was a scramble, everyone within distance diving for the sphere without regard to danger of broken heads.

"The First has scored," said Frank. "Jimmy couldn't stop him, I guess."

"I don't know about that," said the Wee One. "Depends on who has that ball. It's the First's —no, it isn't," as the coach began to dig down among the tangle of arms and legs and heads. "No, it's the Second's, it is, by gravy." For when Horton had finally succeeded in getting to the bottom of the heap, there lay Jimmy just across the goal line, and underneath him, tucked up securely between his arms and his chin, was the ball.

How Jimmy had recovered the ball, no one knew, but there it was; and Jimmy himself wasn't able to tell if he had been asked, for when the pile was untangled Jimmy lay still. Horton slapped him on the back. "There, that's enough, let go of it now; great work, Freshman——" but there was no response, and then Horton turned him over on his back.

"Get the water bottle, quick," he cried. "This youngster's knocked out." In a moment they stretched Jimmy on the ground, opened his jacket and bathed his face with the water which had been hurriedly brought from the sidelines. A thin trickle of blood ran down from his matted hair, just above his forehead.

"Send for Patsy, the trainer, quick," commanded Horton, and some lively sprinting followed to the other end of the field where that individual was working over the twisted ankle of Harper.

Patsy Duffy came in hot haste, with his handbag of bandages, but by the time he had arrived on the scene, Jimmy opened his eyes.

"He's coming to all right. By Jove, Freshman, it was a fine piece of work," said Horton, as he gently nursed the head of the injured boy.

"You'll be all right in a minute. If I had ten more like you we'd have a football team. There, can you walk?" he asked, as Jimmy struggled to his feet and started dizzily.

When he saw that Jimmy had been hurt, Frank sprang from the stand and came down the field, and now, eager to help, he slipped his arm under that of Jimmy, and with one of the players helped to steady him as he walked around. Duffy had already put a bandage around Jimmy's head to stop the flow of blood.

"I'm all right," said Jimmy. "Don't bother yourself about me. Someone bumped me over the eye with his knee, I think."

"That's all for to-day," said the coach. "I've got a word to say to you at the gymnasium," and he led the way in that direction, the players trooping after him in silence.

"Sorry he didn't break his blooming neck," muttered Chip to Harding as they trailed along. "I see he is a friend of that young Armstrong's."

"This probably means," said Harding, "that Horton will want to have Turner play one of the backs of the First team."

"I'll fix that all right. I'll make Turner look

like the father of all the fumblers if Horton puts him behind the line with me."

"How's that?"

"Never you mind, but just watch out. Hillard and Dutton are both in our crowd, and we don't want any Freshman muts on the team. But don't you worry, there won't be any. I have my own plan, and the less you know about it, the better, for you're the captain, and you don't want to be accused more than you can help of playing favorites. Let me take care of it, and I'll show you how to put this young Turner in the shade."

By this time the gymnasium had been reached. Horton stood just inside the door to the main dressing room, and when the last straggler had entered, he shut the door and turned around to face his pupils of the gridiron.

"I want to tell you, young gentlemen," he said in a very quiet voice, "that if you continue to play football as you are playing it now, I might as well quit the job. You haven't improved since that disgraceful defeat by the Milton High School three weeks ago. The material is here but you haven't as much spirit as a sick cat. You do not get together. Once in a while you show

what you could do if you would get together. No team can get together and do anything unless it is a team, every one helping every one else, doing his own work and giving the other fellow a hand when he needs it. If you don't get this spirit, Warwick will show you up worse than they did a year ago. You know very well what the trouble is," (he referred to the Society domination of football interests), "and you know the remedy. Captain Harding, you've got to play the best men on your squad. I'm going to have a long practice to-morrow, and I want you all to report at 4 o'clock sharp. That's all, good day," and Horton turned on his heel and left the gymnasium.

CHAPTER IV.

FRANK HAS A NEW NAME.

It was a gloomy lot of football players that took their shower that night. They dressed in silence. Horton was by no means a mild-spoken coach, yet his method was to get the best out of the players by persuasion and infinite care. But when he occasionally did open up, the words were all the sharper.

"Laid the hot shot into you fellows, didn't he?" said Patterson, sliding up to his classmate, Dixon, as they climbed the slope to the dormitories.

"Yes, Horton has had a grouch for the last two weeks and we can't please him. Better come out and try it yourself."

"You'd please him if you played the game," retorted the Wee One, who never lost a chance of sticking verbal pins into the quarterback. "I noticed a new back to-day, that young Turner fellow. He has Hillard beaten twenty ways for

Sunday," he added. "Wouldn't be surprised if he made the team even at this late date."

"I didn't see him do anything wonderful," growled Chip. "Dutton went through him several times. I'll bet he'll be sore to-morrow where those old keen bones of the big fellow hit him. He's new and he probably put all he had into the practice to-day. To-morrow he'll be like putty."

"If I was a betting man," retorted the Wee One, "I'd lay you some good coin on it. He doesn't know much about it, but he has the stuff in him, and Horton will do the rest. I think he will play in the Warwick game, Chip."

"And I say he won't," burst out Chip savagely. "Hillard is worth two of him," and then seeing a sarcastic grin playing on the features of Patterson, he added, "I'll see that he don't play——" and then he stopped short, fearing he had said too much.

"O, is that so, Mr. Dixon, and when did they elect you captain and coach of this daisy eleven of ours?"

"O, dry up," was all the comment he could get from Chip who, having reached the yard by this time, turned abruptly and left his tormentor.

Jimmy, Frank and Lewis were a few rods behind, and the Wee One waited for them to come up. Frank had just been detailing the story of his arrival at the yard that afternoon and Dixon's exhibition of bad temper. Both Jimmy and Lewis were indignant, but Frank laughed about the incident. "It wasn't worth mentioning," he said, "but it shows you what kind of a chap your quarter is."

"I've been here only three weeks," said Jimmy, "and I've heard lots of things about him being a bully, particularly fond of playing on the smaller fellow. I guess he can't do much to me. I'm only a Freshman, but I'll give him a dig in the ribs if he tries any of his tricks on me."

The Wee One was waiting on the flagged walk in front of Warren Hall as the three boys came along.

"We'll be over in a minute and take you to grub," Jimmy was saying to Frank.

"All right," said Frank, "I'll be waiting for you and getting things in such shape that I can comfortably rest myself to-night. My roommate Gleason's a fearful and wonderful housekeeper, judging from the looks of his effects up to date," and he turned into his entry.

"O, Armstrong, just a minute." Frank stopped and saw his new sophomore friend approaching at a leisurely roll with his hands shoved deep into his trousers' pockets.

"I say," volunteered the Wee One, "that young friend of yours, Turner, looks pretty good to me. But I want to give you a tip. If he plays that way he's sure to get a chance at the team. But for the good of the cause I'm just dropping you a weenty teenty hint. Tell him to keep his weather eye on Chip Dixon."

"Why?" said Frank, showing his surprise very plainly.

"Well, Chip doesn't want him and he'd take any means, fair or unfair, to put him in bad with the coach. It's just a tip from an old fellow. That's all," and the Wee One, having delivered himself of this advice, went whistling on his way.

"I don't see what Chip can do if Jimmy plays well enough to make the team. I can't see what Chip can do to keep him off," murmured Frank to himself as he trudged up the stairs. "But I'll pass along the friendly word of Little Willie, who seems to be a fine little chap and much bigger than his name."

Gleason was in his room this time, curled up

on the window cushion, and he slowly unrolled himself as Frank pushed open the door.

"Hello, Armstrong," he said, "you're my wife, I guess."

"Your what?" asked Frank.

"My wife, my better half, my tried and trusty room-mate, for better or for worser."

"I'm all of that," said Frank, smiling in spite of himself at the voluble Gleason who wasn't the sort of chap he had pictured at all. From the tumbled state of the room, he had drawn his conclusion that Gleason would also be in a tumbled state, but here was an immaculate dandy.

Frank looked his room-mate over, and then his gaze involuntarily traveled around the room.

"Yes, I know," said Gleason grinning, "doesn't look right," as he saw that Frank was trying to adjust his notions anew. "You see I haven't time to keep both of us tidy, the room and me, so I put the time on myself and let the room go. I was never made for a housekeeper."

Gleason was very tall and very thin, and had thin, dark hair which he parted in the middle and combed straight back. His collar was of the white wings variety, very high, and encircled a long, lean neck, and his necktie was of the most

positive and overpowering lavender. Patent leather pumps and socks to match his cravat, and a suit with a decidedly purple cast to it, completed his attire. Gleason had the appearance of being half divinity student, half gambler, and "the other half," as the Irishman said, "dude."

"Well, don't you like me, wifey?" asked Gleason quizzically, as Frank stood just inside the threshold eyeing this strange mixture of a boy. "Sorry if you don't, for it's going to be no end of a trouble. They're chock-a-block with flowering youth at this blessed institution, and if we fight one of us'll have to go into the cellar."

"O, we're going to get on all right," said Frank grinning, "but you're so different from what I had expected."

"Well, I might be worse. What are you going in for?"

"It will be study for a while for mine. I'm three weeks late. I'm too light for football this year, and I don't know much about it, but I'm going out for baseball in the spring. And maybe I will get a chance at the track meets. I can run a little. What do you go in for?"

"Me? O, I just sit round on the bleachers and take notes. I soak myself in records and

they just ooze out of all my pores. Very handy young person to have around, Frank. Don't mind my familiarity, that's your handle—I saw it on your boxes. Good name for the family Bible, but kind of cold for school life. Haven't you got something warmer? They call me 'Cod-fish' because, forsooth, I came from up Cape Cod way. But the cod is a good fish properly treated, so I don't object. Haven't you something in the way of a name besides your Christian ticket?"

"No, just Frank."

"Well, it isn't right. It isn't cosey and homey enough. All right for the school catalogue, but too chilly for every-day use. What's your 'ponchong' as the French say, your big swipe, in other words?"

"Well, I do a little swimming now and then," said Frank. "How would Fish be?"

"Won't do. Can't have two members of the ichthyosaurus family in one room. Let's see. Eel—no, eel isn't good, he spends most of his time in the mud. Duck—no, the young ladies at the seminary'd be calling you ducky some day. I have it—web-foot, Web-foot Armstrong, how's that?"

"Sounds all right," said Frank, "kind of a paddler, eh?"

"An inspiration, my boy. Web-foot is your name from henceforth, to have and to hold until death do you part—Web-foot Armstrong, thus I christen thee."

A sound was heard on the stairs, and in another moment Jimmy and Lewis appeared at the open doorway. They were already acquainted with Gleason, and nodded to him.

"Welcome to our city," cried Gleason coming forward. "Are you acquainted with my young friend, Web-foot Armstrong? He is my steady for whom I've been waiting for three long weeks."

"It's a new name my room-mate has given me," explained Frank laughing. "He says Frank isn't homey enough."

"Web-foot suits him all right. He's a perfect water-dog, you know," said Jimmy. "One of the rising young swimmers of the generation and all that sort of thing; gave the champion a hard rub down in Florida."

"Ah, yes," said the Codfish, straddling. "I saw something about that; let's see, I have it somewhere—yes, here it is," as he began picking in a big envelope among a number of clippings—

"here it is—'Champion Boy Swimmer of Milton hustles the Champion,' copied from the *St. Augustine Record*," and he began to read an exaggerated account of the affair in the Florida tank.

"That was going some," he concluded. "Darnell's record is 56 and 2-5 seconds for the hundred. He did that at the Olympics in Athens two years ago and repeated it in the New York Athletic Club last winter."

The Codfish reeled off the information with the certainty of knowledge.

"He knows every amateur record that was ever made, I think," Jimmy whispered to Frank, "and can tell you what the score of every league contest was since he was big enough to fall out of the cradle; and he is a great practical joker, so they say. You want to look out for his tricks."

"Stop filling us up on your records, Gleason," said Lewis. "I'm hungry as a bear. Let's fill up on something more substantial."

The boys raced down the stairs with a clatter and headed in the direction of Howard Hall beyond Russell. Howard was the old gymnasium which had been turned into a great dining hall, and there, amid the crash of crockery, Frank sat down to his first school meal, flanked by Jimmy

and Lewis. Across the table was the irrepressible Codfish.

"We all mess together here, you see," said Jimmy, waving his hand abroad, "but the upper classes have that end of the hall to themselves. Noisy, isn't it, but you'll get used to it."

Frank nodded. He was taking in this part of his new life, with all his eyes and ears to the exclusion of his stomach. What would his mother think of this rumpus, he thought, and he smiled to himself.

"Hey, Skip, you there, don't hog all the butter, shoot it down here," called the Codfish. "You use as much grease as a six-cylinder transmission." And the butter dish came hurtling down from Skip Congdon, caroming against the pepper and salt dishes and knocking them off their pins.

CHAPTER V.

CAPTURED BY THE ENEMY.

The meal was finally over. There was nothing of the home quiet in it at all. The Codfish well described it as "grab and guzzle and git."

Outside the early dusk had come and the lights of the dormitories twinkled out here and there to meet the moon which had just pushed her disk above the cloudless eastern horizon. The katydids kept up their ceaseless argument in the great elms overhead as Frank and Jimmy walked slowly arm in arm down the yard. Lewis had dashed off to his room to do some long over-due work on a recitation for the early morning hour.

From the other side of the yard came the sound of singing.

"That's the Glee Club tuning up," said Jimmy. "They sing out of doors until it gets too cold to be comfortable."

The song floated over to them beneath the dusky arbor of the elm trees:

Queen's School Days.

Come all you jolly Queen's boys
And harken to our song,
We'll tell you all our school joys,
We'll laugh both loud and long—

Chorus.

For we'll sing ha, ha,
And we'll yell RAH, RAH,
In a merry, merry roundelay.
A laugh and a smile,
We have them all the while
In our happy, happy Queen's school days.

When first I came to Queen's School,
Way back in sixty-eight,
O, wasn't I the green fool
In all this wide estate!

I was a verdant youngster,
As green as green as grass,
They stuffed my head with knowledge
All in the Freshman class.

A year went by so swiftly
On happy wings did soar,
And then the masters made me
A jolly Sophomore.

And next a learned Junior
My fate it came to be,
The Profs. they set me climbing
Straight up the Wisdom Tree.

'And then at last a Senior
With dignity complete,
The Freshmen, Sophs. and Juniors
All kneeling at my feet.

But now the fun is over;
We draw a deep, deep sigh,
Farewell to life in clover,
Good-by old Queens, Good-by.

The boys came to a halt as they listened to the rollicking melody borne to their ears on the evening breeze. To Frank came the exquisite feeling of being a part of the school, and the song thrilled him out of all relation to its value as music.

"Great, isn't it?" and he looked up at the dark, gently swaying branches overhead and let his eye follow the long line of school buildings. "I was wondering only a little while ago," he said, "if it wouldn't be the best thing for me to go to work somewhere and give up school and college."

"Changed your mind about it so soon?"

"Yes, I guess I have. It's fine to be a part of a school like Queen's, and to meet all the fellows, and fight your little battles, and maybe win a few. I don't think I'll ever amount to much here, but I'm going to have a try at everything that comes my way."

"What did your father and mother say about your going to work?"

"O, mother didn't think much of it, but Dad, as usual, put it up to me. 'It's your own life, you know, and you've got to live it. If you want to go into business life now, I'll find you a good place to start, and if you want to take a few extra years broadening your education, there's Queen's ready to take you if you're ready for her.' And I'm glad I decided this way. It's going to be wonderful." He had forgotten the meeting with Dixon that afternoon, and the unhappy incident at his appearance on the scene. The black shadow of Gamma Tau which had fallen across his path did not trouble him.

Frank and Jimmy had traversed the length of the school walk down to the great iron gates at the Milton turnpike, and were returning up the yard. The group on the steps of Russell were still singing and were engaged at that particular moment with the closing chords of a popular tune. Then they broke out in a joyful and triumphant pean, the new football song, written by Arthur Stubbs, Jimmy informed Frank, "editor of the *Mirror,* which maybe you don't know is

the great and buzzing school weekly. Sounds pretty good, doesn't it?"

They both listened as the song rolled out on the night air, doggerel sure enough, but given life and character by the vigorous way it was flung out:

See our team come marching
  Down the white-barred field,
Pushing back the foemen,
  Queen's will never yield.

Charging fast and faster,
  Warwick's on the run,
Disaster on disaster,
  And Queen's has just begun.

Push them o'er the goal-line,
  Roll them in the mold,
Show them who's the master,
  Raise the Blue and Gold.

Cheer the dusty victors
  As they turn away,
Raise the shout to heaven,
  Hurray, hurray, hurray——

"The last line is to be shouted in unison," explained Jimmy, "and it will make a great noise when the whole school gets into it."

The air was catchy, and Frank found himself humming as he walked along:

"Show them who's the master,
Raise the Blue and Gold."

"If I can't do anything else, Jimmy, I can help the team by singing."

"Well, I'm thinking that singing won't save this Queen's School football bunch when we meet Warwick."

"Is Warwick strong this year? I saw they had cleaned up Dean without much trouble, but haven't noticed much about them."

"Strong!" ejaculated Jimmy, "I guess they are. They've taken everyone they've played into camp this fall, and they boast that Queen's scalp will dangle at their belts as the last and the best of the series. Like the fellow in Danny Deever, 'I'm dreading wot I got to watch' two weeks from Saturday—that's the date of the bloody battle down there on the gridiron," and Jimmy jerked his thumb in the direction of the meadow.

In their promenade the boys had almost reached the second entry in Warren Hall when they noticed a group of perhaps half a dozen fellows, a short distance up the walk. As Frank and Jimmy came up to the entry this group got in motion and approached them, and as they passed,

one of the group jostled Frank off the walk. "Keep out of the way, Freshmen," said a gruff voice, but in spite of the attempt to disguise it, both boys recognized it instantly.

"Chip Dixon," they exclaimed in a breath.

"Now what is he hanging around here for with that bunch of his cronies, I'd like to know," said Jimmy. "I wonder if he has a notion of hazing you. By Jove, I'll bet you a dollar that's it. They were waiting for you to grab you, but seeing me here they probably gave it up for the time at least. Let's walk on."

"Why would they give it up? You talk like a Senior, and if I haven't been sleeping like old Rip Van, you're nothing more than a Freshman yourself. My head isn't as hoary as yours by three weeks, that's all."

"O, no, I've been through the mill and they never haze a fellow twice. They gave me a jolly roast though, and that let's me out for the rest of my natural school life."

"What did they do to you?" inquired Frank, who had heard of such doings on the persons of unsuspecting and confiding youth. "I supposed that hazing had been stopped here completely. The *Milton Gazette* said that Doctor Hobart had

ordered it stopped after they ducked that fellow in the river one night and he got his death from it."

"Yes; Dr. Hobart stopped hazing, and threatened to fire anyone he caught at it, but while that has stopped some of the worst of it maybe, it isn't dead by a long shot. They didn't do much to me, tied my hands and feet and rolled me down the hill over there, and gave me an egg shampoo and mussed me up considerable, but I came out of it all right. Dixon was in the gang that did for me, I think, but I'm not sure, because they were masked."

"Well, they're not going to haze me," said Frank, "if I see them first."

"Interference with your personal liberty resented, eh?"

"Yes, maybe. I wouldn't mind anybody but Dixon, and I certainly will not have such a galoot as he is mauling me around, if I have to fight the whole gang."

"Better not fight, Frank. Better take it good naturedly, and it will be over quick. If you resent, you're likely to get it harder."

"Well, if they really are out to haze me there's no help for it, but I'll have some fun, too," and

he stretched out his arm and flexed his muscles. "Haven't been paddling canoes around the Florida Everglades for nothing, Jimmy."

Jimmy grinned. "Better come up to my room just the same; no use courting a ruction. If they are after you, they may come around and not finding you in, may give it up and forget about it. Come on."

"Hanged if I do," said Frank. "I don't believe there's anything to it. You, having had your medicine, are suspicious. If they want me they will find me."

By this time the two had retraced their steps to Frank's entry. All was quiet. The singers had ended their melodious efforts and moved off. Only now and then a single figure could be seen hurrying along under the tree arches. The moon, rising higher in the sky, sent her beams through the branches, and brought out every object in the yard distinctly. No plotters against the peace of No. 18 were to be seen anywhere.

"False alarm, old man," said Frank, as they stood there scanning the school yard. "All is quiet on the Potomac. So long, see you in the morning. Gleason must be visiting, for there's no light in the room."

"Maybe you're right, but, just the same, turn the key when you go into your room. So long, see you in the morning."

"So long," echoed Frank, and turned and entered the arching doorway.

Frank climbed the steps of the first flight three at a leap. He wasn't afraid of Dixon and his gang even if they were on the warpath. "It's great to be back at school," he thought, and as he took the last few steps leading to the second landing, he hummed to himself the lines he had heard the fellows singing:

"Show them who's the master,
Raise the Blue and Gold."

"What's the matter with this stairway,—no light; they must be stingy with their gas," said Frank aloud. "Since Gleason isn't back yet, I'll have a session with these duds of mine and get my room to rights. To-morrow I'll start on this sitting-room ruin. Where did I put those blooming matches?" he added to himself as he opened his room door and stepped inside. "O, yes, I remember, on the corner of the mantel," and he headed for that point in the darkness of the room. He stumbled over a chair which didn't seem to be where it ought to be, certainly it wasn't there

when he went out, but he reached the mantel and began to fumble for the box which he distinctly remembered was there.

"There's Gleason's stein," he said half aloud, as his hand touched a gigantic creation with a pewter top that he had noticed that afternoon, "and there's the alarm clock. I'm getting hotter. The matches were near the clock, I remember now."

Frank stood still and stretched his arm out trying to find the end of the shelf. His fingers touched something which made him thrill and recoil. But in spite of his quickness he felt something grasp his wrist sharply. He tried to draw away, but the hand, for such it was, tightened its grip and another came to the assistance of the first. Instantly there was the shuffling of feet, and with a rush he was surrounded. He felt many hands laid upon him roughly and insistently.

Frank fought desperately, hitting, kicking and trying with all his strength to wrench himself free. By twisting his arm sharply he managed for a moment, to break the hold that someone had on him, and shot his fist sharply out into the darkness with all his force. It found a soft mark

somewhere on someone's face, and hurt, too, as a grunt attested. But he was grasped still more firmly and had no more chance to fight.

In the scuffle in the dark which followed, chairs were knocked over, the table was bumped into, and Gleason's gorgeous shade fell with a crash to the table, and then trickled off to the floor in many pieces. But Frank's struggles were useless, for he was borne backwards to the floor and pressed down by superior weight. Finally he lay on the floor with his hands pinioned to his sides, and a weight of bodies across his legs. Not a word had been spoken in the struggle, but now a voice whispered: "Strike a match, some of you. This Indian hit me on the nose and I'm bleeding like a stuck pig. And that won't make it any easier for him," the voice added, vindictively.

There was a scratching sound and a light flared up. Frank looked up from the floor to see himself surrounded by half a dozen fellows masked and completely disguised. Coats were turned inside out, collars up and caps reversed, the better to conceal their identity. The mask itself covered the face from the middle of the forehead to the upper lip, and, simple though it was, made recognition almost impossible, particularly in the dim

light from the low turned gas jet which the conspirators had set going.

Frank had been neatly trapped, and was helpless as a baby before the superior numbers. He was presently more helpless, for his hands were lashed behind him with a stout leather strap.

CHAPTER VI.

HAZING AND THE WATER CURE.

Frank studied his enemies from his lowly position on the floor, but could not remember ever having seen any of them, a thing that was not strange, since his school life had only begun that afternoon. He noted with satisfaction that one of his assailants was at the other side of the room trying to stop a flow of blood from his nose, which seemed to be copious, judging from the stains on the handkerchief which had been vigorously applied.

"Well, what are you going to do about it?" asked Frank at last, as his captors let him get on his feet. He was savage at himself for having been so easily caught.

"You'll see soon enough, Mr. Armstrong."

"No wonder," reflected Frank, "we were unable to see the bunch of hazers when they were snugly waiting in my own room, which they pre-

pared by darkening with drawn curtains and shutting off the gas in the entry outside my door. No wonder the place was like midnight. It would have been better if I had taken Jimmy's advice."

"Come on," said the bloody-nosed one. Frank had a notion there was a familiar ring in it. It was like Dixon's voice and it wasn't. If it was Dixon's, he was trying hard to change the tone by talking down in his throat. "I'll watch that fellow," he thought. "If it's Dixon he'll give himself away."

At the word of command to move, two boys grabbed Frank, one by each arm, and another stepped behind him.

"Hold on," said one of them, "we've got to tie up his face or he'll be yelling for help, and that won't do." The words were hardly out of the speaker's mouth when Frank felt a muffler flung over his head and face. It was tied securely behind, effectually shutting out his vision and making it a difficult matter to raise an outcry. Then the march was continued.

"Sh-h-h—, someone's coming," said a voice just as they had reached the entry outside his own door, "quick, go up the stairs," and Frank

felt himself headed for the floor above the one they were on. A door banged below, and someone began mounting the stairs.

"What in thunder's this light out for? Some youngster with a poor sense of humor." It was Gleason's voice, and he was scolding to himself because of the murderous blackness. He came climbing up the stairs, stopped at his door, pushed it open and entered.

"Quick," commanded the voice ahead of Frank. "Make a break for the bottom and see that Armstrong doesn't get a chance to speak."

In another instant the captors and captured retraced their steps, a hand being slipped over Frank's mouth in addition to the muffler, to make sure of his silence.

"Bring him around back of Warren," whispered one of the leaders, and in a minute they had cut through the dark passage at the south end of Warren. Frank could not even make a guess where they were headed for, as he was not yet well enough acquainted with the lay of the buildings. He felt himself going down a grassy decline, then through some shrubbery which caught at his clothes, and then again where the grass seemed short and the turf firm. It

seemed like a lawn to him, but as he had been turned around two or three times, he had not the faintest notion after five minutes' travelling where he was.

"Where are you taking me?" he finally managed to mumble to the fellow who had a grip of him by the right arm.

"We're going to give you the stretching treatment, my son."

Frank was not acquainted with it. The voice went on:

"Don't you know that you committed a grievous sin, a very grievous sin, when you talked back this afternoon?" Frank said nothing. "You don't think you're guilty. Well, the highest court of justice in this school sat on your case to-night, condemned you, and turned you over to the executioners, and them's us."

"We are now on our way to the gallows," said a voice to his left in a sepulchral whisper.

Still no reply from Frank. He had made up his mind, since he was in their power, to take his medicine, no matter what it was.

The group tramped on in silence for several minutes, and then stopped abruptly.

"Here's the spot," said one.

"Got the rope?"

"Yes," and there was the sound of a coil of rope falling on the soft grass.

"Coffin ready?"

"Yes, all ready, waiting for the fresh guy that is to occupy it."

In spite of Frank's sturdy heart, a shiver ran down his spine. He felt as though he were in the grip of some horrible nightmare. Perhaps it was a dream after all. He pinched himself to see if he were awake. But the pinch made him wince, and the two fellows hanging onto his arms, one at each side, were too real to be any part of a dream. What could they be meaning to do to him? Of course, they wouldn't dare injure him, but——

"All ready," said a voice. "Prisoner, have you anything to say before you swing? No tongue, eh? Well, executioner, proceed."

There was a stir in the crowd, and Frank felt himself pushed forward into what he supposed was a circle. They wouldn't dare do it, he was saying to himself, but his nerve was sorely tried.

Suddenly there came the sound of someone running across the grass. "A pardon, a pardon for Frank Armstrong," said a new voice. "Hang-

ing sentence commuted to the water cure and imprisonment for life!"

"Curses," growled the chief executioner. "Snatched from me grasp! We would have had him strung up in a minute. Why didn't you lose your way, Paul Revere?"

"Well, since we can't hang him, let's proceed to the water cure. Hurry it up," growled a voice, which in spite of an assumed gruffness put him strongly in mind of Dixon's.

Frank was seized again and they walked rapidly for several minutes in what seemed to him an opposite direction from which he had come the first part of the journey. Soon their footsteps sounded on wood, which echoed flatly to their tread. It seemed like a platform. And there was the faint sound of lapping water. Could it be the river? It was the river, and when the bandage slipped from his face he saw that they were standing on the boat-house float. The river ran past, dark and silent.

"Halt. Prisoner, attention!" commanded a voice, a new one to Frank.

"You can swim?"

"Yes."

"He's the wonderful boy champion of Milton," said a sneering voice.

"Stood the world's champion off on a ten-mile race," said one.

"Set new records from 12 inches to a foot," said another.

"And got the big head about it, and sassed our valiant quarter-back."

How Frank hated the reporter who had printed the story about his swimming. He almost hated Burton for teaching and himself for learning how to swim. It seemed to be bringing him only trouble. He had done nothing to deserve it.

"We want a little exhibition, Mr. Champion Armstrong," said the voice again, which sounded more than ever like Chip's. "Strip."

"The water's too cold," said Frank, startled when he found it was their intention to put him into the river.

"Keep going when you are in. Who ever heard of a champion being afraid of cold water? Off with your clothes, and be quick about it. You've got a minute to shed them or in you go with them on."

Frank began reluctantly to undress, looking, out of the corner of his eye, at the dark surface

of the river, silvery cold under the moon's rays. He watched for a possible avenue of escape, thinking that perhaps a bold dash might give him his liberty, but his captors formed a half circle about him, and the open side of the circle lay towards the black river.

Apparently there was nothing for it but to go in or be chucked in, and Frank chose the former. He slipped off his clothes, and put them in a pile on the float and turned toward the water.

"You've got to go across to the other side, 'Armstrong. If you renig we'll chuck your clothes in after you. And don't turn your head till you get there, or it will be worse for you."

Frank waited to hear no more, but sprang boldly out into the water. How the first touch of the cold water grabbed him! It was like a knife thrust, for the night was in the middle of October, and the coldness of the air had transferred itself to the surface. Below it was warmer, however, and he let his body sink to get the full benefit of the warmth, and struck out for the opposite shore, which was at this point perhaps seventy-five yards away. Soon the blood began to come back to his skin with a glow, and as he paddled away he thought it not so bad after all,

About midstream he slackened up a moment and looked back to the float, thinking perhaps he would be permitted to come back.

"Go on," commanded a voice, and seeing no help for it, Frank put down his head and dug for the opposite shore as fast as he could go. He reached the bank, which was gently shelving, in short order, pulled himself up and looked back.

The float was deserted, nor could a soul be seen anywhere, although the moon's rays lighted up the whole place as bright as day.

Even at that distance he could see his little pile of clothes by the side of the float. He heard the faint murmur of the river at his feet, and away off behind him in the marshes a big bull-frog singing his evening song with a chorus of deep-throated croakings.

"They've gone, unless they're planning some more trouble for me," said Frank, bitterly, to himself. "They must have ducked behind the boat-house and are now on the way back to the school in the shadow of the trees."

He pushed into the water, shivering, and set out for the float, which seemed a long distance away. The water slipped gurgling between his

fingers as he drew his hands through on the stroke, giving him a creepy sensation. He felt that the denizens of the river were staring at him, this strange white body so queerly afloat at such a time of night. He shuddered and drove faster for the float, and felt a great relief when his hand touched the wooden edge.

Frank pulled himself up, and looked carefully around. His tormentors had disappeared as absolutely as if they had been swallowed up in the river, and everything was as still as death except the frog chorus in the marshes, and the occasional cheep of a cricket on the river bank. Lights twinkled in the windows of Warren, and as he listened, the school bell boomed out the hour of nine thirty.

"Gee, whiz, I'll be locked out if I don't hurry," he whispered to himself, and he plunged into his clothes with the greatest alacrity, his teeth chattering. How the clothes stuck to him and clasped his wet skin clammily! "Never knew till now how handy a towel is," he muttered. But he was finally clothed, and a brisk run up through the field put the blood in circulation.

When Frank reached his room, Gleason was preparing for bed.

"Well, my night owl, where have you been? Thought maybe you'd got homesick so soon and had started for the busy city of Milton," was Gleason's greeting. Then, seeing Frank's hair wet, he added: "Been giving the mermaids a serenade, eh?"

"Yes, just been having a bit of a swim," said Frank. "Good thing for a fellow at night, you know, makes him sleep well."

"Great Scott!" was all Gleason could say. "Swimming at this time of night in the river! Well, my eye, you are a funny one. Web-foot, you are for sure and all. Well, you can use the river, but I prefer the good old porcelain bathtub for mine after September first."

"Nothing like the outdoors swimming, you know," said Frank, "and at night you don't startle the surrounding scenery. I'm off for bed. Good-night."

"Good night," called Gleason, who had also dived into his sleeping-room. "I say, what were you doing up here when I was gone? I found my lampshade busted when I came, chairs upset, curtains drawn tight and all that. Little rough-house, eh?"

"Yes, just a little rough-house to celebrate my arrival at Queen's."

"Oh," said Gleason, "I found a leather wristlet over by the mantel when I was picking up the debris. Maybe it belongs to one of your friends."

"Maybe it does; where is it?"

"On the table there; if you dig around you will find it."

Frank went quickly to the table where the wristlet lay in plain sight. He picked it up, examining it curiously. It was made of leather about two inches wide, with two small brass buckles which allowed the strap to be drawn up tightly. Such wristlets were often worn to strengthen and protect a weak wrist. He had noticed that afternoon that two of the football squad wore just such wristlets as these. Could it be one of them? He turned the leather over and over, and started as his eyes fell on the initials C. D. inked on the inside of one of the straps. "Chip Dixon, by goodness! I'll keep this for future use. It may come in handy more ways than one, Mr. Dixon."

CHAPTER VII.

SCHOOL SPIRIT AND SCHOOL INFLUENCES.

Next morning Frank made the acquaintance of Dr. Hobart, principal of Queen's School. The Doctor had the reputation of being severe, a terror to wrong doers, but gentle enough withal when things went right. He was a mere wisp of a man, about sixty years old, not over five feet tall, and with a thin, narrow face and parchment-like skin. His shoulders were bowed a little, perhaps with his weight of learning, for Dr. Hobart was considered one of the best of preparatory school leaders. Indeed, his reputation went far and wide, and the excellence of his school brought him pupils from many parts of the country.

The Doctor's distinguishing feature was his eyes, or rather eye, for he only had one which nature gave him. His natural left eye had many years before been injured and removed. It was

now replaced by one of glass, and the fixed and unwinking position of it when the Doctor was aroused bored straight through the soul of the culprit before him and came out the other side, or so it seemed to the unfortunate who faced him, accused of misdeeds. It would be a brazen youth, indeed, who could stand before that penetrating glance from under the shaggy brows.

Frank had heard a good deal about the Doctor, and it was with some trepidation that he approached the august presence in his quarters on the first floor, third entry of Warren.

"Old Glass-eye is a ring-snorter," Gleason had told him. "They say he dines off freshmen. I'm a brave man, but I was glad when he was through with me. I was so flim-fazzled when he turned that glass orb of his on me that I couldn't have told whether the amateur hundred-yard record had set at ten seconds or half an hour."

But the Doctor was in one of his most amiable moods when Frank was ushered into his presence.

"This is the late-comer, is it?" he inquired, gently.

Frank interpreted it as a criticism, and hurried to say:

"Yes, sir. But I couldn't very well help being late. I was away for my health, and my parents didn't really intend to have me go to school till after Christmas, but I made such good progress that they thought it best to get me in as early as possible, after all."

"H'm; and I suppose you wanted to come?"

"Oh, yes, sir. I like school, and I hope to go to college if I can keep up my work here and pass the examinations."

"So you're going to college. That's good. We can give you the training here; the rest of it depends on yourself. Where do you expect to go to college, my young friend?" and the Doctor brought his baleful eye to bear on Frank.

"York, sir."

"Very good, very good. You are going in for athletics, Mr. Armstrong?"

"Just a little, sir. Do you advise it?"

"Yes, Mr. Armstrong, I advise athletics—just a little, as you say. But one thing I insist upon, that whatever you go in for, it must be wholeheartedly. The great curse of the present time is the spirit of dabbling. Don't be a dabbler." And the glass eye transfixed his hearer. "Whatever you do, do well. When you are in the class-

room, do what you have to do. Make your time count. When you study, study; when you play, play. If you go out on the athletic field, make the most of it, and if you go into any sport, carry it to the highest point of development you can consistent with the time you have to give it. Athletics are only another kind of education, and carried on in the right way they very powerfully supplement the work of the class-room. And, above all things, play fair. Play hard, but play fair. Win if you can, but be a gentleman in your winning, and in your defeat, if you meet defeat, as you will in school and out of it. You have the appearance of quality in your face. You have a chance here to show what you can do in the class-room and on the field. Whatever you do, make yourself felt. Make yourself respected, but also make yourself felt. Respect your schoolmates worthy of respect, and make them respect you by your uprightness.

"I did not mean to make this a lecture, my boy," added the Doctor, pleasantly, the bushy eyebrows drawing into a kindlier line. "I want to help set you straight on this school road, which is not so easy as it may appear to you. If you ever want advice, and you think I can help you,

come to me without hesitation. I am not so black, maybe, as I'm painted," and the Doctor's right eye assumed a kindly twinkle. "And now," he continued, "go over to Mr. Parks, whom you will find in Russell, and he will give you an outline of your school work and assign your classes. Good morning."

"By Jove! he's a brick," said Frank, as he hurried across the yard. "I thought I was going to find a bear, and he was nothing more than a kindly human being with a whole reservoir of good advice."

Mr. Parks, the assistant master, inducted Frank into the school routine, and the boy's school life began that morning auspiciously. He felt that he had made a good friend in the Doctor, and he was bent on satisfying his demand as far as studies were concerned. As to how he would make his way with his schoolmates, was another matter, and he approached it with less of a feeling of certainty.

In the early afternoon of that day Frank made a call on his old friend Jimmy, who was industriously working up his history; but when Frank put his head in at the door, the history book was shut with a snap.

"Hello, Web-foot, how did you get along last night? No hazers, I hope."

"Got along finely," said Frank, "in spite of lots of excitement. Took a forced swim in the Wampaug last night, preceded by a young scrap in No. 18, and this morning I had a session with the Doctor, who gave me enough good advice to keep me straight in line through the whole school course."

"The dickens you say!" exclaimed Jimmy. "You don't mean to say that they got you after all?"

"They certainly did, got me good and hard. Started out to stretch my neck down on the meadows somewhere,—that was the sentence they said,—and then changed their minds, not being willing to sacrifice a budding young genius like myself, and gave me the water cure."

"The water cure?"

"Yes, the water cure, which consisted in making me swim the river, after nine o'clock, and back in my bare pelt."

Jimmy was indignant. "By George, that was tough. Who did it?"

"Oh, I don't know; half a dozen fellows were waiting for me in my room, dumped me on the

floor, tied my hands, carried me off with a muffler around my face, and then, when I was halfway across the Wampaug, skipped and left me."

"Was Chip Dixon in the gang that hazed you?"

"I couldn't tell. The fellows were all masked."

"It's a beastly shame," blurted out Jimmy. "It'll come out, see if it don't, and I wouldn't give a licked postage stamp for the chances of the fellows who did it, if it comes to the Doctor's ears. I've a notion to go out and play detective. To think that I was studying here quietly, and you were being ducked in the river not two hundred yards away!" And Jimmy jumped up and began to walk around the floor, threatening vengeance on the perpetrators of the outrage.

"Oh, don't you bother about it. It gave them lots of fun, and it didn't hurt me," said Frank. "The water sure was chilly when I struck it first, but the swim wasn't long. It made me sleep like a top. And perhaps some good may come out of it."

Jimmy continued to growl, but Frank laughed the incident away, and the talk turned on the afternoon's football practice which Horton had threatened would be a stiff one.

"Speaking of football," said Jimmy, "why don't

you go out and do a little something for your newly adopted school?"

"Oh, I wouldn't be any good. I'd like to try it, all right. But I've got my work cut out for me, staying in school without mixing up in football this fall anyway. Maybe by the time hockey comes around I'll do some work if I'm standing well enough to escape the terrible eye of the Doctor. But for this fall at least I'll do most of my football work on the bleachers, and giving the right half-back of the eleven friendly advice."

"No luck like that for me. I guess I'm not much good and I don't stand well enough with the ruling powers. But maybe, bye-and-bye, I'll get a chance. In the meantime I'll keep pushing and learn all I can. Horton knows the game, doesn't he?"

"Yes, the way he spotted the bad play on both teams was a caution. He must have twenty pairs of eyes."

At this moment in the conversation Lewis strolled into the room. "I've decided," he announced with heavy dignity, "to cut out football. I've been getting on pretty well at it, and the coach doesn't want me to drop out now when I'm pretty sure of a place" (Jimmy and Frank ex-

changed winks), "but I feel my studies need my time. I think I'll go out for the Whitney Fellowship. So you fellows will have to get along without my society down on the gridiron."

"Bad, too bad," murmured Jimmy. "Such a chance, too, for the team, just now when you'd be put in at center. It would be a great thing for Milton, too, to have a representative on the great Queen's School eleven. It would be headlines for the papers. Sorry you can't give it the time."

"And speaking of time," said Frank, "isn't it about time you were getting under way for the gym? I think I see the gathering of the clans from here," he added, looking out of the window in the direction of the field.

"Wonder what Mr. Dixon will feel like when Lewis announces his intention of retiring from the squad," said Jimmy, with a wink, as he prepared to leave.

"And I wonder what Mr. Dixon will do to one James Turner," retorted Lewis.

"Oh, I guess he won't bother him very much," said Frank.

"Is that so? Well, you don't know that young-

ster as well as we do. You'll hear things about him when you've been here a little longer."

"I've heard some things and seen some others, and perhaps I know Mr. Dixon better than he thinks I do. And I'm not far wrong when I say that that young fellow will not bother Jimmy too much."

"Yes, you'll jump in and hand our lively young quarter a few straight digs in the ribs, I suppose."

"Maybe so, but he had better keep himself to himself."

"Oh, come on here, stop your scrapping. Come on and watch the emaciated Second, now that Lewis has left us, being smeared by the riotous First. Oh, I hate to think of it," cried Jimmy, dashing out of the door.

When the squad reported for practice at four o'clock sharp, Horton had on his business face and he lost no time in getting things moving. "I'm going to see if these two teams know anything about football at all. We've been dodging around here playing tag for a month. Now we've got to begin to play football. Let's have a little punting and see if you backs can hold the ball today."

The backs were divided into two squads, and two of the best punters were sent up to the middle of the field, with a center to snap the ball. Boston Wheeler—his Sunday name was Worthington, but Boston was handier, and better described him, as he came from that famous city known as "the Hub"—was punting the ball in long, lazy curves which carried thirty yards, and then dropped head first, much to the disgust of the racing backs.

"Mine," yelled Spud Dudley as with hands outstretched and neck craned he drove for one of Wheeler's high ones.

But he misjudged, as the ball dropped too straight for him and bounced around on the group. The wrath of the coach was drawn upon him instantly.

"What do you think you are catching, Dudley, a featherbed? Get under those high ones. They drop quick when they come spinning with the long axis parallel to the ground. Don't let them catch you napping. And haven't I told you to make a little pocket for the ball between your hands, which must be held closer together, and your chest? Then the ball can't get away from you. That's better, Freshman." This was directed to

Jimmy, who took a low end-over-end punt from Dobson, the other punter, at top speed. "I don't know where that Freshman got it, but he has the right idea about catching punts," Horton added.

Punting practice went on for five minutes or so, and then, after a brief signal drill between the First and Second elevens, the coach called both teams to the middle of the field.

"Now, this is the last practice game before the Barrows game, and I want you to do your best. You can win easily if you will only forget about yourselves, and play for the team. Let's see you do it. Come on, every one into it," and the whistle spoke out shrilly for the beginning of the practice game.

CHAPTER VIII.

QUEEN'S MEETS BARROWS AT FOOTBALL.

In spite of Horton's appeal for good playing, the sample of football that the First team gave was anything but encouraging. The coach was all over the field, exhorting his charges to their best efforts, but their best efforts fell very far short of what he wanted.

After the kick-off, the First had made some good gains through the Second's Line. Then Dutton missed his signals and lost a lot of ground. He stood dumbly with the ball in his hands while the opposing tackle came ripping through the line, seized him around the waist, and ran him ten yards back towards his own goal before Dutton could yell "down."

"Isn't that the limit of all things?" said the Wee One to Frank. They were sitting together on the bleachers with a bunch of other critics, passing judgment on the playing, good and bad, as they saw it enacted before them. The Wee One was a critic of no mean calibre. "Isn't that

the limit of all things? If they could only perform an operation on the thing that Dutton calls his head and get some grey matter from a jackass and insert it, he might possibly remember some of the signals,—at least such little ones as 'straight through the line,' which is about all he's good for anyway."

"Guess Horton's going to have apoplexy now, isn't he?" inquired Frank, as he watched the coach striding about among the players, shaking his clinched fists. But Horton recovered himself, and commanded another scrimmage. This time the First pulled itself together, and under the urgings of the quarter and the vigorous coaching of Horton, tore through the Second for great gains. It was fast and furious, slang, bang, up-and-at-it-again football, and the Second was retreating down the field, doing its best to hold its ground, but being swept aside by the rushes of the giant Dutton.

It was first down on the Second's ten-yard line, and it looked like a touchdown. The First was about to take revenge for the rebuffs the Second eleven had been giving them for several days.

"Now," shrilled Chip at the top of his lungs, "put it over. 16—32—11."

"Hillard's signal for a tackle-shaving play," translated the Wee One, and Hillard was off like a shot for, say what you might about his uncertainty with the ball, he was extremely fast on his feet, and when he was able to hang onto the ball he could be depended on to make ground. But poor Hillard, whose star had been bright that afternoon, was in so great a hurry to start that he missed the more important matter of securing the ball firmly. It dropped to the ground. He made a step in its direction, but misfortune upon misfortune, kicked it with his foot and sent it rolling towards the end of the line where an alert end of the Second team pounced upon it.

The whistle in Horton's lips shrieked savagely, a signal to stop play. The First eleven gathered together stupidly, and scowled back savagely at the members of the Second, who stepped around elastically and grinned broadly.

"I wouldn't be in Hillard's place for a row of apple trees all in full bloom," ventured the Wee One. "Something's coming to him, all right. What did I tell you?" as Horton raised his voice so everyone could hear it:

"Hillard, you may go to the sideline. I've got

to have some one who can keep his fingers around a ball. You've thrown away all the good work your team has done. I won't need you again for some time." Horton delivered his sentence in a calm voice, and then turned towards the sidelines where some of the substitutes were seated. "Where's that Freshman who played on the Second yesterday afternoon?" he said. "Hey, there, Turner, take Hillard's place. We'll see if you can hold the ball."

"Hurray!" cried Frank, jumping to his feet in excitement, "Jimmy's going to get his chance. That's great, and he's got it in spite of Mr. Dixon."

"And that will peeve Dixon," chuckled the Wee One. "There they go."

Jimmy was on the field in a flash, and his sweater was slung behind him as he ran.

"Now," said Horton, "I'm going to give you a chance here, and if you make good you may get in the game to-morrow. Your business is just now to follow your signal, and hold onto the ball. The signals are the same you have been playing under. Come on." And the whistle sounded. "Here, First eleven, take this ball again on the fifteen-yard line and try it."

On the very first play, Dixon gave the ball to Jimmy, who, following close behind his tackle, who opened a convenient door in the opposing line, went half the distance to the goal line.

"Good work!" shouted the coach.

Dutton on the next down sliced between tackle and guard, and got three yards and first down.

"I hope they don't put it up to Jimmy to make that four yards," said Frank, "it looks like a mile."

"Well, I'll bet Chip gives him the ball. He won't give him anything easy to do, and Chip would rather not score than let him cinch Hillard's place."

The Wee One was right, for the next instant Jimmy had the ball, and was ploughing into the line with his head down. Then he was lost in a heaving mass, but somehow slipped out of it, emerged free, and threw himself across the goal line. The First had scored. "Good work, Freshman," said the coach, but the quarterback turned and walked up the field sulkily.

For the rest of the afternoon's practice Jimmy fairly outdid himself. When he went into the line the ball seemed to be a part of him, and he rarely failed to make his distance. With his

short, strong legs, thick neck and powerful back, he bored and squirmed through the smallest holes. On defence he was in every pile, and generally at the bottom of it.

"That boy has real football instinct," said Horton to Mr. Parks, who came down to the gridiron to look on. "He is green yet, but he is going to make a good one, you will see. He doesn't know anything about carrying the ball, yet he carries it, and he doesn't know anything about the science of tackling, but he stops his man. Where on earth he learned what he has, I don't know."

And Mr. Parks agreed that a new football player had come to town.

Practice finally ended. Horton's "That's enough for to-day," brought Frank scampering down from the stand to walk joyfully along beside his old playmate to the gymnasium.

"Knew you could do it, Jimmy," he said, as he trudged along with the perspiring hero of the afternoon, who was well hooded up in a blanket to keep the rather chilly October breeze off his overheated body. "It was great to see you." Frank's eyes fairly shone with pleasure. He took a greater pride in it than if it had been his own success.

"Glad I gave up the game," said Lewis, now in everyday clothes. "Two great football players in one room would have been more than Warren could have supported, eh Frank?" Frank was so happy that he would have agreed to anything that afternoon.

Barrows came down in great force the next afternoon, and the light blue of the Academy was flaunted everywhere on the yard of old Queen's. The followers of Barrows freely boasted a coming victory for their eleven, and, if truth must be told, the eleven was worthy of the confidence expressed. Barrows Academy drew from an older class of boys than did the Queen's School, many of its inmates on graduation going directly into business, for which it, in a measure, fitted them.

"Did you see those giants on the Barrows team?" quoth the Wee One, meeting Frank on his way to a geometry recitation. "They must have imported them from the foundry."

"It's a fact, they do look mountainous alongside some of our fellows," admitted Frank, "but we ought to know more football, we certainly have the best coach."

"The coach part of it is all right," said the

Wee One, "and we know football, or, at least, ought to, but we don't seem to be able to get it out of our system."

The game was set for three o'clock, and long before that hour there was an exodus of the entire school, for classroom work on Saturdays closed at noon. The game was considered something of a test for Queen's, which had been playing very erratic ball all the year. There was a good deal of grumbling about the way that the Gamma was running things through its captain, Harding, and Chip Dixon, who seemed to have a powerful influence over Harding. A good many thought that the best players in the school were not having a fair trial, but as yet there had been no open revolt. Real rebellion against the rule of Gamma Tau still held off, but there were grumblings on the horizon which indicated a storm if things did not improve. And to-day was a chance for the crowd in control to show that they were playing the kind of ball expected from such a school as Queen's with such a coach as Horton.

Frank escorted Jimmy to the gymnasium that afternoon, where the teams were to dress for the fray, and the Freshman half-back was in a fever

of excitement. Frank buzzed along with encouragement in every word.

"If I can only hang onto the ball," Jimmy would say, "but I had a notion yesterday two or three times that Dixon was trying to make it hard for me to get the pass. Once I nearly dropped it, and I was scared to death, for the coach was right alongside of me. My heart went as far down as my shin guards for sure."

"I'll watch him for any tricks like that," thought Frank, but to Jimmy he said never a word. It might only be Jimmy's imagination in his excitement.

"All I've got to say to you," said Horton to his charges when they were dressed and ready, "is to attend to business and play as a team, and think about what you are doing. These fellows are bigger than you, and you will have to outwit them. Use your heads and keep together. Now, skip."

In the first collision of the game, the big fellows from Barrows swept the lighter Queen's School back as though they were made of paper, and screams of delight rose from the stand where had gathered the hosts of Barrows. Down the field they went—five yards through tackle, ten

yards around the end, five yards through center. Twice the attack had bowled Jimmy over after breaking down the line, and twice he had been able to stop the rush dead, without a gain. Once he had the joy of pushing the Barrows' halfback through the hole he came for at a loss of a yard.

"Look at Jimmy Turner, the Freshman," shouted the Wee One. "If they would all play like that kid we'd have a chance."

"What's Dutton doing,—Oh, what's he dreaming about? Missed his man. Did you ever see such a dope?"

"Turner got the Barrows' chap that time. Good for Jimmy."

"Hold 'em, Queen's, hold 'em."

But the Barrows' attack was not wonderfully varied, and little by little the advance was cut down as the Academy eleven began to approach the Queen's goal.

"Get together, get together, Queen's, and stop them," begged Captain Harding, and working like one, the boys responded to his cry.

It was third down on Queen's 12-yard line, with a yard to go, and the Barrows' backs held a consultation. The stands speculated as to

whether they would try to carry it, or try a drop kick. For the latter piece of football, the aggressors were in a good position. But finally they elected to rush, and settled carefully down to position, balanced on their toes, and alert for the signal. If they could make their distance, it looked hopeless for Queen's, for the remaining yards to go for a touchdown would be easy, so the spectators figured.

The whistle shrieked, and the lines came together with a bang. Humphrey, the Barrows quarter, who had been playing a fine game and directing the team like a general, now made his first mistake. Thinking that the going was too hard through the line, he sent his fleetest halfback on a delayed pass out around right end. For a moment it looked as though he had made a master stroke. Campbell, the Queen's right end, was drawn in because he believed the play was to be made on the other side of the line, but Jimmy had interpreted correctly, too late, however, to warn Campbell. The Queen's tackle came through hard, and halted the Barrows' runner a minute, just long enough to let Jimmy get under way.

The Barrows' back ran behind an interference

of the fullback, half and quarter, and it looked like a hopeless task to break this compact mass. Jimmy followed the interference out, crowding it back as well as he could, watching his chance. Suddenly he realized that the runner with the ball was outdistancing not only Jimmy himself, but his own interference. Jimmy felt that he could not handle them all, and he could not hope to get through the interference alone and get his hands on the runner. He did the only thing possible,—that is, he threw himself with unerring instinct against the knees of the interference, in a kind of side-dive. The effect was instantaneous. The interference was running so closely massed that there was no chance for them to dodge, and they went down over the Freshman's body in a tangle. The runner with the ball was so close that he, too, went sprawling, heels over head, and before he was able to get to his feet, big Boston Wheeler had pinned him down. It was Queen's ball.

How the Queen's stand did yell: "Turner, Turner, oh, you Turner!"

"Three cheers for Turner!"

"Rah, rah, rah, Turner, Turner, Turner!"

One might have thought there was only one

41274B

man on the Queen's School eleven. At the cheers for Turner, although his half-back's action had probably saved the team from a score, Dixon's face took on a sour look. There was too much Turner in the game to suit him. It was a malicious eye he turned on Jimmy.

From this point, Queen's took up the march down the field, and steadily, as Barrows had come into Queen's territory, so steadily did the Queen's eleven fight their way back, and gradually it began to dawn on the partisans of Queen's School that they had a chance. Five yards here and five yards there brought the play quickly to the Academy's 20-yard line. A penalty for holding set them back, but on a pretty fake kick Dutton went straight through center to the five-yard line.

"Touchdown, touchdown," yelled the Queen's bleachers.

"Good old Queen's, we have got the Wheelbarrows where we want them."

"All over, but the shouting."

First down and on the enemy's five-yard line. It looked certain.

But there are many slips in football as well as in the everyday walks of life, for on the next play there was a fumble, and an indescribable

scramble to recover it. And when the scramble was over, an Academy boy was found on top of the leather. A groan went up from the Queen's crowd. Down among the tumbled players two stood erect, one was Turner and the other Dixon, and the former had his fists clinched.

"Turner fumbled," said some one.

"Did you see what happened?" Frank cried, excitedly, to Patterson, with whom he was sitting.

"Don't you think I have any eyes?" said the Wee One, indignantly. "It was a dirty trick. He gave the signal and threw the ball at Jimmy's hands. Didn't give him a chance to get it. It was a deliberate trick, a contemptible trick," he added.

A few minutes later the half ended, and Queen's came to the sidelines. Horton was raging.

"Turner, you disappointed me. Right in the time we wanted you most, you failed us."

"It wasn't——" began Jimmy.

"I don't want any excuses," said Horton, sharply. "Hillard, go in at right half and finish the game there."

CHAPTER IX.

WHAT CAME OF A FUMBLE.

Things went badly for Queen's in the second half of the game. Hillard was as brilliant and erratic as ever, and made several dashing runs around the ends, but he inevitably slipped up somewhere, and his unfortunate fumbling lost his team many more yards than he gained for it. Chip played like a demon, trying to justify himself in his own mind for the trick he had played Jimmy, the team and the school. He was in every interference and worked every instant to put Queen's in a position to score, but it was all to no avail. Chip was so intent on his work with the back field that he failed to hold the team together, and as the game went on the Queen's presented a less and less organized effort. Barrows slammed into them for big gains when the Academy had the ball, and at last solved all of

the Queen's attacks so completely that the old school eleven was making no headway.

Finally, after an exchange of punts, Boston Wheeler, being obliged to kick against the wind, Barrows took up the march to Queen's goal from the latter's 35-yard line. Queen's line was tired physically from the pounding, and weak, for there was not enough stamina now to resist the bigger Academy fellows, who seemed to be growing stronger every minute. There was no Jimmy Turner now to drive his sturdy body fearlessly against the oncoming Barrowites.

"It's all over now," said the Wee One, "the team has lost what little fighting spirit it had at first. They will be buried out of sight with not even a leg to mark the graveyard."

Frank admitted that there was no help for it.

Horton walked up and down the sideline, shaking his head, unable to stop what was coming.

Soon the Barrows' catapult was rammed over the line for a touchdown. The angle was too difficult for the goal when the ball had been brought out, and Morton, who did the kicking, failed. From that point on, the game was a rout. Harding, having none of the qualities for leadership about him, could not hold his team together.

He was useless in the emergency which was now upon the Queen's eleven. Chip tried to help by banging his men on the back, and crying desperately to "hold them, hold them, show your sand." But if they ever had any sand it had been scattered earlier in the game.

And how about the Freshman half-back who had been so unkindly thrown out of the game, and who sat watching this second half going against the Queen's School eleven? He was only a Freshman, but black despair was in his heart. He was only a Freshman, but he loved the old place, and he wanted to have the privilege of helping to put the school flag uppermost in all the contests in which she had a part. And to be so meanly tricked for no fault of his, and pitched off the field before the whole school was almost more than he could stand.

When the thing happened he was perfectly well aware how Chip had served him, and he sprang to his feet to settle the matter then and there with his fists, but after a tense moment his senses came back to him. Perhaps others had seen what had actually happened, and he would not have to bear the shame. But no one seemed to have noticed it. The coach evidently

had not happened to see the incident, lynx-eyed though he was.

"He may have been looking aside at that moment," thought Jimmy, "and I mustn't blame him. I just looked like a dummy when he turned and saw the ball rolling around on the ground, and a hole big enough to drive an ox-cart through waiting for me. But I'll settle up with Dixon some day, and I hope it isn't far off." He ground the words out between his clinched teeth, and his look boded no good for Chip Dixon when the day of settlement should arrive.

What need is there to go into detail of that disastrous afternoon? Three times more did the jubilant Barrowites plough through Harding's demoralized eleven, and when the final whistle blew, the Queen's crowd saw the awful record on the board of 23 to nothing. It was the worst defeat that had ever come to Queen's at the hands of any but Warwick. It was a sting never to be forgotten, and only to be wiped out with reverse figures twice the size.

"Well, I'm glad that's over," said Gleason to Frank as the crowd slowly filed down off the stand, and the tired teams drew each into a knot and gave the yell for the opponents. "If

it hadn't been for that rotten fumble of young Turner I think the Wheel-barrows wouldn't have gone home so full."

"It wasn't a fumble, Mr. Gleason," said the Wee One, "and if you thought it was you better run right along to the oculist and have him put his prettiest pair of specs on you!"

"Oh! p'raps it was a clever little piece of legerdemain then," grunted Gleason, but neither Frank nor the Wee One heard him. They were hot-footing it after Jimmy, who was tailing after the squad with his eyes on the ground and gloom in his heart.

Frank ran up behind him and slipped his arm around his shoulder. "We saw it, Jimmy," he said. "I didn't think he dare carry a grudge against you so far. But it lost him the game."

"I don't know," returned Jimmy. "They were too heavy for us." But there was a lightening of his spirits when he felt that the play was not entirely misunderstood. "Dixon made it hard for me to get the ball several times, but he always did it so cleverly that no one could see him. I wouldn't believe it if I hadn't seen it and been the victim of it as well. He got me out and his room-mate in."

"He got you out sure enough," said Frank. "I suspected he would swing something against you, and he was determined to get his room-mate in at any cost."

"Yes, and it cost him the game," said Patterson. "That's what you get for playing favorites. I'll bet the scrub could have put up a better argument against the Academy than the First eleven, the way it played to-day. Wonder what the coach will say to them?"

But the coach had little to say.

"Boys," he said, simply and without any venom in his words, "there's something wrong with you, and we'll try to find it next week. The way you played to-day, you haven't the ghost of a show to win your big game two weeks from now. You are a sore disappointment. I've done the best I could to show you how, but I can't go out there on the field and play your game for you."

It was quite evident from Jimmy's actions that he wanted to be let alone, so Frank and the Wee One slipped out of the gymnasium and headed for the school yard.

"Frank, what are we going to do about it? I don't want Queen's to lose to those farmers up the river, or I'd go to Horton with what I

know and make a clean breast of it. That would certainly get Dixon fired from the team, but we'd be no better off, for in spite of what you may say about Chip, he's a peach of a quarter."

"Let's go to Dixon and tell him we know that Jimmy's failure to get the ball was due to him, and not to a stupid fumble, as it seems to have appeared to everyone else."

"We'll have our trouble for our pains I think, and I wouldn't be surprised if he fired us both out of his room, and shied a few boots, with feet in them, after us. Chip's got a bad temper, and he's not in a good humor just now."

"Let's try Harding. Even if he is a dummy, I don't think he'd stand for Dixon making a goat out of him and the rest of his team simply because he wants his room-mate and a brother Gamma to play."

"No use, Frank. Harding hasn't spunk enough. He's a pretty fair end, but he has no more business to be captain than I have to challenge for the heavyweight championship of the world. I'm afraid we can't do anything without busting up this whole eleven."

"What do you suppose the Doctor would do if

it was proven to him that Chip threw the game away for a favorite?" asked Frank.

"Well, if I know anything about Old Glass-eye, I'd say he'd put a stop to the meteoric career of this football eleven of ours. And that's what I don't want to see. If we can only force Chip to drop his grudge against Turner, and get down to business, we might still have a fighting chance, but it's hopeless I'm afraid. The whole of Gamma Tau is behind him. And the worst of it is he's knocked poor Jimmy, and has done it so cleverly that even Horton think's Jimmy's unreliable in a tight pinch, and if there's anything Horton won't forgive a man for, it is to fail when he is most needed. With no one strong enough to push his case and the captain and Dixon dead against him, there's not much more chance for Turner now."

Frank had been thinking hard, and now he stopped dead in his tracks.

"By Jove!" he said, "I think I know a way to force Chip Dixon to do as we want to have him. If he doesn't do it, there's a fair chance of his ending his career here. I hate to be mean, but when the other fellow is mean and will not let up, we've got to meet him with his own weapons."

"Well, fire away, young Sleuth; do you hold a deadly secret over his head? Out with it if you do."

Frank quickly gave the Wee One a description of the hazing, which was interrupted very frequently by Patterson with snorts of indignation.

"I'll bet Dixon was mixed up in that affair. If we only knew, we'd fix him."

"But supposing we did know?"

"We'd have him where the wool was short and the skin tender."

"Well, that's just it, for when I got back to the room that night Gleason had picked up a wristlet that Chip wore the first day I came here. I haven't seen a wristlet on him since. I looked particularly to-day, and he had none on."

"Any marks on the wristlet you found?" inquired the Wee One, eagerly, beginning to catch the drift of Frank's plan.

"Yes, 'C. D.' inked plainly on the inside of one of the small straps, and besides that I made a hunt in the grass near the boat house the next morning, trying to trace out the way we went to the river, and accidentally came across the strap with which they tied my hands, and on that was printed Chip's full name. It looks like one of

the straps which go around an extension grip. Here it is, and here's the leather wristlet."

"Jumping geewhillikins! Come to my arms, you Sherlock Holmes. We have Chip Dixon where we want him. This seems to be certain proof, and if we gave the story to Glass-eye, Chip wouldn't last long enough to pack his suit case. The old man is dead down on hazers since the accident we had here two years ago. He gives every new class a red-hot talk about it.

"To-night you and I will make a call on Mr. Dixon," added the Wee One, who had now thoroughly espoused the Freshman's cause, not only for that individual's sake, but for the sake of justice to the school. "I'll come over to-night after supper, and we will have a little session with our shifty quarterback, which, I think, will make him so gentle that he'll eat off our hand. So long, see you about half-past seven," and the Wee One tore off, but not before Frank had time to shout: "This is all between ourselves."

"Sure," returned the Wee One, "ourselves and Mr. Christopher."

CHAPTER X.

FRANK SPRINGS A SURPRISE.

When Frank and the Wee One knocked on Dixon's door that night in the second entry, first floor of Russell Hall, it must be confessed that they were not as brave as they had felt themselves to be earlier in the evening when the plan of campaign had been decided. Frank felt that he had been at Queen's too short a time to be taking the high hand with the quarterback of the eleven, and he was uncertain as to how it would affect his standing in the school.

"I tell you, Willie, I wish there was some other way to get at this," Frank said as they cut across the broad walk under the elms.

"Have you some other plan under your bonnet?"

"No, that's the worst of it. I don't like the idea of being put in the position of forcing Jimmy on the eleven."

"Oh, what are you sticking at? If you don't do it the force will be on Jimmy to keep him off. It may be too late even now, for Jimmy had his chance, and to most of those who saw the game the indications were that he is not to be trusted with the ball in a tight place. We know better because we were suspicious of Chip and had a guess as to what he might be up to."

"All right," said Frank, "but just the same I wish we could get at it in a different way. Probably all on account of me, Jimmy will now get in bad with the Gamma crowd. I wish I hadn't come to school at all."

"Oh, come, if you are getting chills in your pedal extremities we will go back and put you to bed and warm you up with a hot water bottle. But if you are looking for victory, as Napoleon said, 'follow me into the breach.'"

"Don't you worry about my feet, Wee One, they're all right. I was thinking of Jimmy only; I want to help him, not hurt him."

By the time the boys had finished their discussion they had reached the entry.

"Do you know his room?" inquired Frank.

"Yes, second floor right," said the Wee One as he began to climb. "Rooms with Hillard, as

you probably know. Hope Hillard isn't in. If he is it will make it harder to get to the subject, because Hillard would be displaced by Jimmy if he were found good enough to make the team. Here we are."

The Wee One's sturdy knock drew a loud response from within: "Come in." It was Chip's voice, and the tone did not sound pleasant.

Patterson pushed open the door and stalked into the room, as brave as a lion. Frank followed on his heels.

"Came to see you on a little business, Dixon," volunteered the Wee One, as he took a seat over by the fireplace.

"Indeed! You came at a bad time. I'm trying to get back work done."

"Sorry we disturb you, but it's important. This is my friend, Frank Armstrong."

Chip nodded curtly. "Yes, I've seen him before. He hasn't been here very long, has he? Quite an infant, so to speak," and a sneer played on his face.

"No, he hasn't been here very long, but he's going to stay a long while, and may grow up to quarterback of the School eleven or something like that, or make something better," retorted the

Wee One, who now that the battle was in sight was rather enjoying the preliminary skirmishes.

"Well, what's your business?" said Chip, roughly. "I don't want to appear rude, but I've got a lot of work to do before I go to bed. Football takes most all a fellow's time just about now."

"It was about football that we came over to see you," said Frank, speaking now for the first time.

"Is that so? It's a little late to be going out for the squad," said Dixon, "and, besides that, I'm not the captain."

"I'm aware of that," retorted Frank, "and I'm not going out for the squad this year. We are interested in a fellow who is now on the squad."

"What do you think of Jimmy Turner, that young Freshman who has been showing up so well lately?" broke in the Wee One.

"He'll be good by-and-by, but he is punk now on handling the ball. It was his fumble to-day when we had a chance to score on Barrows that upset the team."

"It wasn't his fumble, and you know that as well as any one," and Freshman though he was, Frank looked the quarterback of the eleven

straight in the eye. That individual had started back at the contradiction, but now recovered himself and, shutting up his fist, he took a step in Frank's direction.

"What do you mean, you little pup? Didn't Turner drop the ball? He could have scored easily if he'd had the gumption to hang onto it."

"He dropped the ball all right, but he dropped it because you didn't give him a chance to get it," said Frank, his fighting blood mounting to his cheeks.

For a moment it looked as if there was to be a scrap right on the spot. At the first accusation Chip rushed over to Frank with his eyes blazing and fists clinched. Frank held his ground, and he was reinforced in an instant by the Wee One, who jumped the moment Chip made his rush. Perhaps the consciousness that he was in the wrong and that the accusation was true withheld the blows that Chip appeared ready to rain upon his visitor.

"Come on, Dixon, let's talk it over," said the Wee One. "Put your bad temper in your pocket, and we will get down to business."

"All right, go ahead, but I don't want any one

to come to my room and tell me that I chucked the game this afternoon."

"But supposing it was true."

Chip blazed out again. "I've a notion to chuck you both out of the room by the way of the window."

"That's neither hospitable nor kind. What we came here to find out is, are you willing to give young Turner a fair chance to make the eleven if he is good enough?" said the Wee One.

"What are you driving at, anyway? I'm neither the captain nor the coach."

"Of course you are not, fortunately, but you're the quarter, and as such you can make or break a halfback that is trying for a place on the team. At present your room-mate, Hillard, is playing at right half, and, naturally, since he is a fraternity brother of yours, you want him to stay there. And you don't want any one else, even though some one else might improve the eleven, to win his place. Isn't that so?"

Chip sat glowering at the speaker, but did not answer.

"All right. There's an old saying I've seen somewhere, and I guess it's true, that 'silence gives consent.' You admit what I've said?"

"I don't admit anything of the kind," snapped Chip. "Hillard is a better back than this fellow Turner will ever be."

"Since," went on the Wee One, as cool as a cucumber, and paying no attention to Chip's interruption, "since you agreed that what I say is true, I want to know if you will play square with Turner. Goodness knows this eleven has been messed up by you and your friends in Gamma Tau pretty badly, and if there's the smallest little bit of a chance to improve it, and let us have an opportunity to pull out the Warwick game, you ought to be willing for the sake of yourself, if not for the school, to drop the favorites."

Chip was showing evidences of the greatest difficulty to keep from bringing the matter then and there to blows. He was opening and shutting his hands and gritting his teeth. Finally he burst forth:

"I don't know what you duffers are here for, trying some kind of bullyragging on me. It's you fellows who are playing favorites, not me. Now I want you both to get out of this room and stay out. I'll play just whoever I wish on that eleven."

"Oh, so you are the captain, after all—I thought you said you weren't."

Chip could have bitten his tongue out for the admission, but it was too late now to change it, and, having made the statement, he went on: "I've got enough of a say to keep Turner on the side line. He's only a Freshman," he said contemptuously. "If he's good enough he can make the team some other year. He can't make it this one, not as long as I'm quarterback."

"Oh, very well, Mr. Dixon, if that's the way you feel about it there's no use in our staying here and keeping you from getting that lesson," said the Wee One, "but getting it will be a waste of time because you will not have a chance to use it. We only wanted a promise from you to let Turner alone, and not to hinder him in any development he may make. Since you are not willing, we have a little story for the Doctor in the morning. If he hears it, you might as well pack your pajamas, and buy your ticket for New York. Good night, Mr. Dixon," said the Wee One, making a sweeping bow. "Come on, Frank, it's no use, the quarterback has a severe case of astigmatism."

Frank rose and the two headed for the door.

But Chip's curiosity was aroused. He followed them to the entry. "May I ask what you have that you think the Doctor will be interested to hear?"

"Oh, no," said the Wee One, "we don't want to take your time. It wouldn't help our case any. We must be hurrying along."

"But I insist on knowing," said Chip, following to the head of the stairs. "If you are going to tell the Doctor something about me I have a right to know. What is it?" Alarm began to show in his bearing.

"Well, if you are dying to know about it, it is just this. We have pretty good evidence that you were one of the bunch that hazed Frank here, the night he came to school."

Chip gave a sneering laugh. "Oh, that's it, is it? I guess you won't be able to prove that. And that's what you've been taking up my time for? You are a pretty pair of young sleuths, ha, ha, ha, ha!" Chip threw his head back and laughed long and noisily.

The Wee One waited till Chip had laughed himself out and then said, very quietly: "Well, maybe we can't prove it, and perhaps we were wasting your time and our own. Good night."

Chip stood grinning as the boys took a couple of steps down the stairs. Suddenly the Wee One stopped, put his hand in his pocket, and pulled out the leather wristlet. "Oh, by the way, Chip, is this yours?" he asked, holding it up so that Chip could see it plainly.

"Sure, it's mine," said Chip. "Where did you find it——" and there he stopped as a grin spread over the faces of the two boys who were watching him intently. "No, I guess it isn't, after all; it looked like one I lost," he added, seeing that he had made a slip.

"Well, I'm sure it is yours. There's a very pretty little bunch of initials inside, and they look remarkably like C. D. And how about this perfectly good little strap?" holding up the strap that Frank had picked up on the playground the morning after the hazing. "This has the legend 'C. Dixon' printed very plainly on it. You make very pretty letters, Chip. You will make a fortune as a painter of window signs when you grow up and finish your education." The Wee One's tone was smooth, but irritating, and Chip was ready to fight, but he saw at once that he was powerless, and he knew very well what the Doc-

tor's attitude would be. The proof was before him.

"Come back into the room," he said, and when they were inside the door, "What do you want me to do?"

"All we want to have you do is to give Jimmy Turner a fair chance. If he is good enough to make the team we don't want you to put anything in his way," said Frank. "In return for this we agree to say nothing about the hazing."

"It's a bargain," said Chip. "Now give me the straps."

"Oh, dear, no," said the Wee One, "we will return those when the season is over. But for the present I think I'll hang onto them, thank you. Good night, Mr. Dixon." The Wee One put the emphasis a little on the Mister. Chip did not answer, but stood with his back towards them, looking out of the window.

"Well, I guess that will hold him for a while," said the Wee One as they left the building. "And now it is up to young Freshman Turner himself."

CHAPTER XI.

A PROSPECTIVE PUPIL.

The Monday following the interview between Frank, the Wee One and Chip Dixon, found things moving very much better down at football practice. Horton turned up with a smiling face at the gymnasium that afternoon while the squad was dressing. "Boys," he said, "we are going to let bygones be bygones. You've been playing worse ball than you knew, and after that awful game on Saturday I thought we might as well all go over to the river and jump in. But that isn't the way to win out."

One of the boys, lacing a refractory shoe, grinned up at him. All had expected a heckling and were not prepared for this.

"But that isn't the way," he continued. "This is the last week we have, that is, the last week of hard work before our Warwick game, for we can't do much the next week which will count for

anything. It will be just the polishing-off process. So I'm going to ask you if you will give me your whole attention. We are going out to make this season a success in spite of the up-and-down game we've been playing. Are you with me?"

There was a general murmur of agreement among all the fellows, and a few spoke out. "We will do our best, Mr. Horton," said big Boston Wheeler. "The trouble is that we don't seem to get together."

"That's just it," returned Horton, "you are never thinking about the team; it seems to be always about your individual selves, and no team ever amounted to much that was simply eleven men. The eleven men must work as one man to make gains and stop gains by the other fellow. When you work that way and have confidence in yourselves individually as well as in yourselves as a team, there's nothing can stop you. We have a chance yet to win our big game, a fighting chance if everyone will work with a will. Now, that's all I've got to say, the rest of it is up to you fellows."

It was with something a good deal like determination that the squad tramped out onto the gridiron that afternoon, and under the urgings of

Horton, the First eleven gave the Second such a pummelling as it had never before received. Everything went with a rush. Jimmy was playing on the Second and putting every ounce he had into the work, but he was unable to stop the charges of Dutton, who came through the line like a bull.

Three times the First scored on the Second, and twice held the Second safely inside the 10-yard line. Horton was jubilant, and the practice ended with hope high in every one's heart. Tuesday's practice was even better, and the school, which had fallen away from the support of the eleven, began to take more than a listless interest in the progress of things on the gridiron. Jimmy was still on the Second, and taking most of the punishment from big Dutton. Hillard seemed to have taken on a new grip of the ball and was playing faultlessly. Jimmy had had only one chance at the position on the First, and while he was in this position Chip had lived up to the bargain.

"Wonder what's come over Dixon," said Jimmy to Frank that night, "he gave me that ball to-day as if it were the dearest possession he ever owned and was afraid I might break it. He was so

careful he almost made it hard for me, but hard in a different way from the day the Barrows put it over us. No chance for a fumble there."

Frank and the Wee One exchanged winks.

"Oh, I guess Chip has had a change of heart," said the latter. "Reformed, maybe."

"He certainly has reformed as far as I'm concerned. I grew quite fond of him before the practice was over, although I know he doesn't like me."

"Whether he likes you or not makes no particular difference as long as he gives that ball to you right," said Frank.

"Oh, but his sweet disposition comes too late, for I'll not get another chance. Hillard is playing like a breeze, and he's certain to go in first. My only chance is for him to break a leg or his neck or something, then I might have a lick at it."

"But in the meantime you are learning the game. I saw Horton speaking to you the other day; what did he say?"

"Oh, he told me to keep at it, I might make the team in a year or two."

"Don't believe him," broke in Lewis. "Horton was asking for a little bit of advice from my room-mate." Lewis, since his retirement from

the onerous duties of holding down the sideline, assumed the position of critic and cynic. "And that makes me think," Lewis continued, "I saw Horton talking to you the other day in the gymnasium, Frank. Was he asking you for advice, too?"

"Oh, just telling me that I ought to come out and get a little practice at the game myself. He said he thought I was too light this year, but that I might thicken up next year. He put me through a course of sprouts on what I knew and what I didn't know."

"Didn't take you long to tell him that latter section, I suppose," ventured the loquacious Lewis, "but please take warning from my case and recognize that even the most gifted coach sees only a small amount of the real talent." Lewis threw out his chest.

"Frank, did they tell you how Lewis distinguished himself the first day he was out?" said Jimmy.

"Well, that story ought not to be lost. Horton picked up a couple of elevens the first afternoon we were out, along about the end of the first week of practice. He had been showing us how to fall on the ball, which was where Lewis

shone bright as the morning star. When the ball got loose and Lewis fell on it, it never got away, but it generally needed repairs, he fell on it so earnestly, and you know Lewis isn't a featherweight."

"This story is a chestnut, Frank," said Lewis. "Jimmy got it out of a book somewhere and retails it about me. He is giving himself more and more to unbridled fiction."

"Well," continued Jimmy, going on without seeming to notice the interruption from the hero of the story, "Lewis was placed as a half-back on one of these catch-as-catch-can teams. It was an impressive sight to see Lewis trying to run with that ball. About the time he had made up his mind which way to dodge, some one had him about the legs. Horton was good natured then and only laughed. But there was one thing that Lewis could do to the Queen's taste; as I told you, he could fall on that ball, and once, when it came popping out of the line, he dropped on it and saved the day for his side."

"See him swell up at this part of the story," said Frank.

"That particular afternoon," went on Jimmy, "in one of the scrimmages in which Lewis' team

was on the defensive, one of the other backs came up to the line, but owing to the mix-up of the signals and a mix-up of players, some one lost his head-gear, and it rolled out on the side that Lewis was defending. He immediately fell on it while the runner recovered, swept over him and scored, and that was the last of Lewis as a real football player. He looked impressive after that coming onto the field, and I think once or twice Horton let him carry the balls, but they were the spare ones which were tied together with a string."

Lewis took the chaffing good-naturedly. "But wait until next year," he said. "I'm going out again and I'll try for center. My weight and fine build will strengthen up that weak spot I can tell you."

"Maybe we'll all be on the team next year," said Jimmy.

"And then it will be a mess, sure," said Frank.

As the boys were still joking about the possibilities of Lewis for center on the team of the following year, there came a knock at the door.

"Come in," yelled Lewis, "don't stop to knock."

It was a Western Union Telegraph messenger.

"A telegram for Frank Armstrong," he said.

"Went to your room at No. 18, and the fellow over there said to pursue my diligent way thitherwards, and ask for one Frank Armstrong who might be in company of a fat boy with pink cheeks," Jimmy snickered, "and a brick top." It was now Lewis' turn to snicker.

Meantime Frank had taken the telegram and had broken the seal. He read it with the greatest surprise.

"Great Scott, fellows, listen to this:"

" 'New York, October 25. Frank Armstrong, Queen's School, Milton. David has decided to enter Queen's if possible. Will reach there Thursday. Signed, J. B. Powers.' "

"Can't get along without you. Overpowering magnetism and all that sort of thing," said Lewis.

"It's fine, isn't it?" said Frank. "The school is crowded, but if the Doctor has no objections I can take him over in No. 18 with me. There's barrels of room, and I'm sure Gleason wouldn't mind. He's a good old encyclopedia. He's busy just at present compiling records of the high jump since 1852."

"Why doesn't he go back to 1492," suggested

Lewis. "Columbus was quite a little jumper himself."

"And there was the cow that jumped over the moon," said Jimmy; "tell him to get that record sure. The old bovine put them all in the shade."

"Come and tell him yourself," cried Frank, at the door. "I'm going over to see if we can't squeeze another couch in my sleeping den. It's not as big as the Grand Central, but if it can be managed, David is sure going to be with me."

"If the room is too small, why not try a trundle bed?" called out Lewis, but Frank was half-way down the stairs and did not hear him.

Frank burst into No. 18 where Gleason was scratching away in his book of records. "Say, Gleason, got any objection to having another room-mate?"

"What, Web-foot, going to leave your old wife?" said Gleason, looking up in surprise.

"I don't mean that. The fellow I was down south with this summer has decided to come to Queen's, if he can get in. I know the dormitories are all crowded, and I'm willing to have him bunk in with me. He's a dandy chap. You'd like him."

"No objections from the Codfish," announced that individual. "We can set up a four-poster

in the room here. It'll be very handy to hang our clothes on. We need more room here anyway," and he looked around at the disarray of clothes piled on chairs and tables and window-seat. "Bring him in, sir, the more the merrier. Always room at the top," and Gleason returned to his scratching.

"It will not be necessary to put him in here. He can have half of my room," said Frank. "If the Doctor has no objection, it's settled. I had more room than I needed anyway."

"When's he coming?" inquired Gleason.

"The telegram I had says he's on the way and will be here Thursday."

"Is he a Web-foot, too?"

"No, David hasn't any feet to speak of. He walks with crutches and can't take part in athletics, but he's about the finest little chap you ever saw."

"Speaking of feet," said Gleason, "since you are not doing anything in football, why don't you go down to the track and do something there? You are a likely looking athlete, and you might be able to help old man Duffy win some points for Queen's. He needs candidates for every event. Nearly all the first string fellows

graduated last year. Great chance for some young buck to distinguish himself."

"Why don't you go down and show him some speed yourself?"

"Me? Oh, I'd rather watch. You see I don't come of an athletic family. I'd rather set down what the other fellow does. Got to be some one to do that, you know."

The notion stuck in Frank's head. "I believe I'll do it," he said half to himself. "To-morrow I'll give myself up. I don't think anything will come of it, but I'd like to do something to help the school, and father has barred me out of football this year, but says I'll be hardened up enough if I stay out of it till next fall."

"You'll be hardened enough if you stay with me," said the Codfish, and Frank dived into his room, laughing.

CHAPTER XII.

A TRY-OUT ON THE TRACK.

Track athletics at Queen's had not been in a very flourishing condition for some years prior to the opening of our story. The popular sports were baseball and football, and these took the pick of the fellows who had a desire to do some athletic work. Patsy Duffy, the trainer of all the teams, managed now and then to find some pretty good men in the sprints and short distance runs, and he had once sent a team of six down to the Interscholastic games at New Haven, which picked up eleven points in second and third places, and that, when you consider that the school had less than 200 boys to draw from, is not so bad as it might be.

But although Queen's was never in any great danger of winning the Interscholastics, the school was nevertheless nearly always represented by some one. Warwick was, in track athletics, as

in every other of the sports, the natural rival of Queen's, and for the last two years had made away with the annual track contest by a good, wide margin of points. The trainer had gone over the incoming class pretty thoroughly for material and had not found much of it, so he was pleased when Frank stepped up to him at the track the next afternoon and said he would like to try for a place on the team.

"Where did you come from?" said Patsy.

"From the Milton High School, but I never did much there in the way of athletics, excepting to play a little baseball and football."

"Can you run or jump?"

"Don't think so."

"Can you sprint or hurdle?"

"Afraid not."

"Jump?"

"Can't even jump, to my knowledge. But I'm willing to try any of them."

"Well, this doesn't sound promising, but some of the best I've had knew nothing about it when they came here, and I've sent some of the best men they ever had to Yale and Harvard and Princeton. Ever hear of Tinker Howe, the great Yale half-miler? Yes; well, he was one of the

men I trained. Came out here one day and at first couldn't run a half mile in three minutes. But he came along fast. And there was Winchester, the fellow who played tackle on Harvard last year, and who was one of the best shot-putters that ever went to Cambridge. He was one of our fellows, trained right in this little piece of ground."

"I don't believe I'll ever be like those fellows, but I want to try anything you think I'm fitted for."

"Well, suppose you run up to the gymnasium and get into some togs. Miggs, the rubber up there, will fit you out and if you like the work, and I like you, we'll fix you up with a regular suit. Hurry it up, and I'll have you jog around the track once or twice with Watkins here," indicating a young fellow who was prancing up and down the stretch with long, springy strides.

Frank was quickly equipped at the gymnasium with a jersey and a pair of misfit running trousers which Miggs had dug out somewhere for him. "I feel like a scarecrow," thought Frank, "but maybe after this performance to-day he will not consider my efforts worth much."

"Come on now," said Patsy, as Frank came

trotting back to the track. "Let's try a few starts. You will run only fifteen steps or so. Don't suppose you know anything about starting, Armstrong?"

"No, I guess I don't."

"All right. On your marks, get set, GO." Frank, accustomed to the starting signal for swimming, went away like a shot and ran away from the half-miler, who was taking things more leisurely.

"I thought you said you didn't know anything about starting," said Patsy, as he and Watkins came back to where the trainer stood.

"Oh, I forgot to tell you that I have done a little swimming racing, and we start about the same."

"So much the better. Some very good runners are spoiled because they can't start fast enough. When the pistol goes off you'd think they were going to take root. You don't seem to be bothered that way, but I'm afraid you haven't got stride enough for a long distance racer. Try it again."

The boys lined up and started at the word "Go," and again Frank started in excellent form; but this time Watkins was watching for him, and

got off his marks with more speed than before, although, even then, Frank led him a step.

Patsy was smiling as they came back to him. "Did you ever run a hundred yards, Armstrong? No? Well, I'm going to try you at that now and see what you can do. You have the appearance of a sprinter, at least as far as the first twenty yards go. Do you think you can hold it at the pace you set out?"

"Don't know, but I'll try."

By this time a half dozen other runners, in their airy, abbreviated costumes, who had been trotting around the track or taking little dashing spurts, had gathered around to see the new boy tried out, and there was a good deal of interest manifest when Patsy said he would have the new boy try a hundred yards dash.

Just at that moment the Codfish strolled up. "Hello, wifey," he said as he saw Frank in running costume; "took my advice, didn't you? You look handsome, but are you any good?"

"We are just going to try to find out," said Patsy. "I'm going to run him a hundred yards. Will you go up and start him? I want to take his time. Here's a pistol. Collins, go along with Armstrong and pace him down the full distance,

and bring him as fast as he can come." Collins was the best sprinter of Queen's, as Frank afterward learned.

At the sound of the pistol, Collins was off with a great burst of speed, but Frank, in spite of his lack of training, followed him closely for half the distance. Then the training of the practised sprinter began to tell and Frank dropped behind, but not so far behind but that Patsy's face wore a much pleased grin when he finished. Collins, who was a Junior and slated for the captaincy if Gamma Tau didn't undertake to knock things out of gear with politics, came back and patted him on the shoulder. "It was well run, Freshman," he said.

"What did he do it in?" said Gleason, coming up to Patsy when Frank, who was not in the best of condition for sprinting, was recovering his wind. Patsy held up the watch. Eleven and two-fifth seconds, it said.

"By Jove, that's good time for a kid, and his first trial, and not in condition, isn't it?"

"It's first rate," said Patsy. "He will be a good one or I miss my guess. He has a good build for a sprinter."

Meantime Frank was taking a turn around

the back stretch, and when he came back, Patsy said: "Armstrong, that's enough for to-day." Frank was turning away when Patsy continued, "Don't go yet, I want to have you try a jump for me. We need a jumper badly, and you may be the fellow we are looking for. You said you never jumped?"

"No, only in fun, and the jumps were never measured."

"Well, come over here and try one or two, and we will see if you have any spring in your legs. Most natural sprinters have."

"You see," said Patsy as they reached the broad jump runway, "you get up your speed here and then strike this take-off board with whichever foot comes most convenient for you to jump from; lift yourself into the air and strike in that soft sawdust pit. The jump is measured from the face of the take-off to the point where you break the ground nearest to the take-off block. Do you get me?"

Frank nodded and walked down the runway, measuring carefully with his eye the distance he had to go.

"All ready," shouted Patsy; "come on!"

Frank took a run, gathering momentum as he

came. He saw ahead of him the trainer and Codfish Gleason and a dozen boys watching his effort, and in spite of his best attempts he could not concentrate his mind on that take-off block. It seemed to lie somewhere in a fog, and he simply kept on running with the result that he dashed across it into the sawdust, which is put there to break the fall of the jumpers, tried to stop, and went headlong. He picked himself up, covered with sawdust, and much chagrined at his failure.

"I want to try that over again," he said. "I couldn't seem to see where that block was, and I missed it."

Patsy grinned. "The best of them do that sometimes. It's one of the hardest things in jumping. As you come up to the block, you want to concentrate your mind on that place. Arrange your steps so you will come to it on the foot you can best jump from, and come down on the block as hard as you can, bouncing off it, so to speak, and going as far up in the air as you can. The momentum you have gained in your run will carry you along. That's the idea of the broad jump. And don't get nervous." Patsy communicated this information to Frank as he walked along with him to the head of the runway.

"The take-off, the take-off, the take-off," was drumming through Frank's mind as he came rushing down for it. So determined was he not to overrun the block that he under-did it this time, and he "took-off" about 14 inches before he reached the block. But even in spite of this handicap, the measuring tape showed a jump of 15 feet 6 inches.

"O, but," said Frank, "you are not measuring from where I jumped."

"That's not the way we do it. We measure, as I told you, from the face of the block, so that as you jumped you really handicapped yourself 14 inches. It would have been a very good jump, indeed, if that 14 inches hadn't been wasted. The best jumpers contrive their run so as to hit the center of the block squarely with the ball of the jumping foot, the toe even projecting over the block. Try it once more, and try not to over or under-run the block, but to hit it squarely."

"I never knew there was so much to jumping," said Frank, as he walked back for his third trial. "But this time I'm going to get it if it takes a leg."

Fixing the block firmly in his mind as he had been told, and also the idea of carrying as high

as possible into the air, Frank came rushing down the runway. This time he struck the take-off like a veteran, rose in the air and was carried along by his speed. As he was coming down he threw his feet out in front of him so as to get as much distance as possible, but when he struck he had more distance than he could hold and fell backwards. His heels had broken the ground at 16 feet 9½ inches, but in his efforts to keep from falling he had put his hand behind him, and from the block to the break made by his hand it was only a little over 15 feet.

Frank thought it hard lines not to get all he had actually jumped, but saw at once that the rule was right—that the first break in the ground from the face of the take-off was the only right thing to go by, although his actual jump had been in this case two feet farther.

"That's all for to-day," said Patsy, "you've had enough for the first day."

But Frank pleaded for one more try to see if he could not get it right—the very last—and Patsy relented.

And this time Frank did get it right. He came carefully up to the block, got a good raise and carry, and held his footing when he struck the

ground. The tape measure, held by the Codfish and Patsy, showed 16 feet 3 2-5 inches, a remarkable jump, indeed, for an unpractised schoolboy.

"To-morrow at 2 o'clock I want to see you here, and we'll do a little more work. Your showing to-day is all right. Maybe I can make something out of you," said Patsy, and when Frank had trotted off in the direction of the gymnasium he said to Gleason: "There's the right sort of a chap. Doesn't know much about it, but willing to try, and crazy to make good at whatever he tries. I'll make something out of him, see if I don't. The fall trials come off a week from to-day, but I'll bet in spite of the short time he has had to work, he'll make some of the older ones hustle to keep ahead of him. I don't know yet about his sprinting, but he certainly can jump like a deer."

CHAPTER XIII.

LEARNING TO RUN THE HUNDRED.

Frank was at the gymnasium at 2 o'clock the next afternoon, garbed in a running rig that the Codfish had given him.

"How did you come to have running clothes with you?" asked Frank, surprised when the Codfish produced from the recesses of his trunk a neat blue jersey and a pair of spotless running trousers.

"My fond papa said he thought I ought to take some exercise when he sent me up here. He told me he was a peach of a runner in his school days, and talked so much about the way he walloped every one in sight on the track that I got kind of ambitious, and let mother put these things in."

"Why don't you go out for running yourself? You ought to make a runner," and Frank gazed admiringly at the long legs which Gleason had spread out on the window seat, the lower parts of them dressed in gorgeous green socks.

"Oh, I don't like to fatigue myself. If I run I grow weary, and if I'm weary I must rest, and I'd much rather rest without being weary first. Don't feel backward about taking the duds, old chappie, because your Uncle Dudley will never put them on. If they had something like a 15-yard dash I might get out and make a record or two myself, but since the shortest distance is a hundred yards and the longest is a mile, I guess I'll put my spare time in some other way."

"And how about your father's ambitions for you?"

"Oh, dad won't mind. I don't believe he was much of a runner anyway. He just lets his imagination carry him away."

So Frank became the possessor of a fine outfit, and wore it that afternoon with considerable pride. Patsy nodded pleasantly as he came onto the track. "See you're on time," he said. "Now jog around the track very easily two or three times just to get limbered up, and then we will have a few starts with Collins and you. Felt sore this morning, did you?"

"Legs pained me when I woke up this morning. Dreamed that I fell out of an aeroplane."

"It's the jumping," said Patsy. "I've known

fellows when they began to jump to be so sore they'd have to walk with a cane. But you'll soon be over that."

"I sincerely trust so; it's no fun."

Patsy was like the manager of a three-ring circus, as any track trainer, who knows what he is there for and who is worth his salt, ought to be. He had a word of caution to the long-distance runner to run flat-footed and save himself for the sprint, if sprint he must at the end of his race; to the pole-vaulter he reiterated the oft-repeated injunction that to get over the bar when it was 10 feet up meant to pull up with the arms and not altogether a spring from the legs; to the hurdler he gave a minute of his valuable attention, indicating where his take-off for the barrier was too near or too far away, and if he lost too much time in the flight.

"If you're going to hurdle on this track you've got to get down to the track and run on it and not try to sail through the air." And even when he wasn't giving direct coaching, Patsy was making mental notes for use later on when they would be of more value to the coached.

Frank had jogged around several times when Patsy hailed him on one of his trips, and said:

"Now I want you and Collins and Herring"—that was the other sprinter in the school, a second string man to Collins—"to come up to the start of the hundred. We will do a little work."

The little work consisted in getting down at the starting line, balancing delicately on the balls of the feet—the one just on the starting line and the other about fourteen inches behind—with the tips of the fingers resting lightly on the ground, and at the sound of the pistol, shooting forward from that position without the delay of a thousandth part of an eye-wink.

On the first trial Frank made a sorry mess of it. The crouching sprinter's start was new to him. He had started the day before from a straight standing position, but when he got to the crouching attitude—pictures of which he had seen many times, and as many times wondered how runners could possibly start from such an awkward position—he found it necessary to come to an upright position before he could get under way. Both Collins and Herring gained a stride on him at the very start, and a stride is a lot in a hundred yard race.

"See here, Armstrong," said Patsy. "The sprinter, that is the fellow who runs the short

distance, hasn't time to start off easy. From the shot he must be moving forward. Now you come straight up. Watch me," and Patsy dropped down to the racing position, and shot away from it with an astonishing swiftness that made Frank open his eyes. Patsy in his time had been one of the best runners, and knew to a nicety just how to do the trick.

"Come on, now again, and remember that you shoot out and not up," and Patsy held the pistol over his head. "Get ready, set——" but Frank in his eagerness felt that the pistol shot was coming, and dashed off only to recover in a moment, and return shame-facedly to the mark.

"That would cost you a yard, Armstrong, if it had been an actual race you were running. But we'll not penalize you this time. Now again."

Little by little Frank began to get the science of starting. Patsy showed him the why and wherefore of hole-digging so that the starter would get a better grip with his feet. In a dozen or more starts Frank showed improvement steadily, and was overjoyed at the praise of the trainer.

"You are doing well, Armstrong," said Patsy; "keep it up. Now take a little rest while I see

what these high jumpers are doing. They look from here as if they were playing leap frog. Those fellows never will learn to turn right when they get in the air," and he hurried off to correct some faults his keen eye had detected even from that distance. While he was gone the boys pranced around and took a couple of starts by themselves.

"Have you run much?" inquired Herring, who was a Junior and had worked hard for what he got. He was not especially well built for sprinting, being a little too stocky and short-legged, but what he lacked in form he made up in determination. He had almost reached his limit in development and never could be a first-rater.

"No," said Frank, "I've never run before; this is my first offence."

"Gee whiz, you'll soon have me lashed to the mast. If you can hold the gait you strike at the start clear through to the finish, I'll be third string right off the reel. Here's Patsy back to give us our trial on the hundred."

"Now, boys," said Patsy, "this is the last for you to-day. I want you to run this hundred through as fast as you can. Collins, you take the pole; Herring, you next; and you, Armstrong,

have the outside. No crowding. And, Armstrong, don't forget what I told you; don't lose time getting up—the finish isn't up in the air, it's down the track a hundred yards. On your marks! ——" The three stepped into the little holes they had dug for their feet. "Get set!——" They crouched and touched the tips of their fingers to the ground, leaning well forward, necks craned and eyes straight ahead.

"Bang!" went the pistol, and six legs and six arms began to work like pistons. Frank had somehow remembered his instructions and got a better start even than Herring. He tore along ahead of that runner who was making a desperate effort to reach him. Collins was running freely on the pole, a half stride in advance. For half the distance the order remained the same, but then Frank's lack of training and lack of experience began to tell, and Herring reached him. At the 80 yards he was running breast to breast with Herring, but that individual's bandy but powerful legs and better wind carried him ahead from that point. Collins finished first, Herring second, and Frank a good third.

"Well run," shouted a hearty voice from the side of the course as the three runners pulled up

just beyond the finish line; and Frank, looking up, saw Colonel Powers and David at the side of the track. He ran over and shook hands, overjoyed to see them. "Thought you weren't coming till Thursday," said Frank, "and this is only Wednesday."

"Well, you see," returned the Colonel, "David couldn't stand it any longer. We came up to Milton last night intending to go down to Eagle Island to-day to look after the house, but David persuaded me to come out here instead, and so here we are. But I didn't know you were a runner as well as a swimmer."

"O, I'm a pretty poor apology for a runner. Maybe I'll be able to run some day and win a point for the school."

"Well, judging by the way you were coming down the stretch with those two fellows, you would be able to put the Powers family to shame, eh, David?"

"Frank can do anything he undertakes as well as the next one," said David, "and I think if he starts out to run he can do it and win. Don't you remember the race down at St. Augustine, father?"

"Track work is over for the day," said Frank;

"come along to the gym while I get into my every-day clothes, and we'll go up to the room; or, if you would like to, we'll go over and see the football practice. David, you remember Jimmy, don't you? Well, he is a candidate for halfback on the school eleven, and in spite of his being a Freshman, I think he'll make it."

"Jimmy was the owner of the *Foam* that sunk in the foam, was he not?" inquired the Colonel. "I remember how plucky he was when we picked him out of the water. You all were, for that matter."

"And Lewis Russell is here, too, in the same class with us; they entered at the first of the term, and I came in three weeks late."

"Is Lewis on the eleven, too?" inquired David.

"No; Lewis' football sun set very early in his career, and now he sits on the bleachers the same as I do, and watches the other fellows get talked to by the coach.

"How does it come, David, that you changed your mind about school? I thought you were going to study with a tutor the same as last year," said Frank.

"The trouble was," said Colonel Powers, "that David, who has been a pretty quiet fellow all

his life, got a taste of companionship this summer on the yacht, and when he went back to his tutor, old Mr. Melcher, he found the work drier than ever. So he wanted to know if he couldn't come along to Queen's with you."

"Yes," said David for himself. "Before I met you I didn't think I'd go to school at all, but last summer changed me somehow. I saw what a good time Burton had, and when I thought of you over here making lots of friends and taking part in things, I wanted to come along."

"Yes, and it happens," said the Colonel, "that Doctor Hobart is a personal friend of mine, and it was easily arranged that David come here, though it is nearly the end of October and half the first term gone. The only difficulty about it seems to be, for I have just had a talk with the Doctor, in getting the right kind of a room for him; they are crowded to the limit here."

"Oh, I forgot to tell you that the room part of it is all arranged. He's going to bunk in with me. The night I got your telegram I put it up to Gleason, my room-mate, and he had no objections. The place is not big, but plenty big enough for us two."

David beamed with joy, and the Colonel ex-

pressed his pleasure that the boys were to be together again. "David needs companionship to bring him out of himself," he said, "and it is possible that David may be a help to you, Frank."

That night the Colonel and David sat down to table in the school dining hall together with Frank and Jimmy and Lewis, and when dinner was over they strolled under the great elms of the school yard and listened to the Glee Club singing on the steps of Russell Hall. To David it was like fairy-land.

CHAPTER XIV.

A MYSTERIOUS APPEARANCE.

David saw his first football practice the next afternoon and enjoyed the spectacle of Jimmy zipping through the line or spilling the fellow with the ball when he happened to be playing on the defensive. Dixon was living up to the part of the contract forced upon him by Frank and the Wee One, and made no further obstacle for Jimmy when the coach occasionally put him over in the backfield on the First eleven. But Chip bore the Freshman halfback no very deep affection. He was, however, becoming more and more impressed with the belief that Jimmy was the genuine material and that he was pretty nearly necessary to the welfare of his eleven. Hillard generally took precedence, that is, he went in at first, but Jimmy would get in awhile toward the end of practice.

During the week, practice had been very satis-

factory, by far the best of the season, and when on Saturday the school eleven scored 12 to 4 against the Milldale High School eleven, hope began to run high in the school that perhaps after all Queen's might pull out that Warwick game, which was now only a week off.

Friday night there was a mass-meeting under the elms in the yard, and Horton, Mr. Parks and a graduate of the school of some forty years before—a Mr. Walbridge—were the speakers. They stood on the steps of Russell and torches lighted up the scene. There had been a torchlight parade up and down the walks of the school, and the procession finally halted in front of the wide steps of Russell Hall where the speakers were in readiness.

"We are going out next Saturday for a victory, boys," said Horton. "We have been down in the mouth all the season because factions have been pulling us one way and another, but that is all over now. You played good football this afternoon, but you'll have to play better next Saturday for those fellows up the river are going to give you the battle of your lives. But if you will forget all your disagreements and get to-

gether, and then stay together, we'll show them yet."

"You bet we will," sang out a voice from the rear, as Horton retired. "Three cheers for Horton."

Harding, the captain of the eleven, wakened from his lethargy by the enthusiasm, jumped out in front of the bunch of boys and cried: "Now a long one for Mr. Horton, get into it," and they did with a vim and a snap which made Horton's eyes brighten.

"Rackety wow, rackety wow, rackety wow, Horton, Horton, Horton."

The rumpus stirred the katydids in their leafy bowers overhead and they were loudly affirming and denying when Mr. Parks gave the boys a word of encouragement. Mr. Parks was followed by the elderly graduate of the school, who told them of football when he was at Queen's.

"We hadn't a quarter of the number of boys to choose from in my day," he said, "and I don't think we were any bigger, but we worked together and played together and ate together, and when we went out on the field to play our games we were so completely together that the team moved like one man. And if you will look over

the records of those old days, you'll find that Queen's didn't lose many games.

"It's the same on the football field as it is in the daily walks of life. To be successful, I mean to have the right kind of success, you've got to play fair and hard and keep thinking. If some one slams into you, I know the feeling is to retaliate, for that's human nature; but when you're tempted to do that, just think that while you're slugging the fellow who slammed into you unnecessarily, your opponent may be getting past you, for you can't do two things at once. I remember a fellow in my own class; they called him 'Biff Scott.' He used to play center, and when he could keep his temper he was a wonder. But a hard jolt always made him mad, and then he was a very poor center. In our big game with Warwick, for our big game was with Warwick just the same as yours is now, the Warwick center knew of Scott's weak point, so he teased him into forgetting what he was there for, and they put play after play right over him and actually won the game because he fought and didn't play.

"I'm of the opinion," the old graduate continued, "that what Mr. Horton says is right, that

if you give up these little dissensions, get together and stay together, you may yet make this football season something to be proud of. I, for one, believe you can and will do it. That's all."

Again the school yell ripped out sharply and was echoed back by the walls of Warren just across the way. Cheers were given for the team, the coaches, the captain, and a crashing one for Queen's School. Then the torches were swung over shoulders again, and the procession took up its course, the tramp of many feet following the marching melody of the school—

Tramp, tramp, tramp, old Queen's is marching,
Marching onward to the fray.
Can't you hear our ringing cheer,
Rising loud and high and clear,
Queen's will fight and win the victory to-day.

Tramp, tramp, tramp, the team is marching,
Onward down the field they go.
They're the best in all the land,
They've the heart, the brain, the sand,
And the courage high to conquer every foe.

Tramp, tramp, tramp, the battle's raging,
Cheer the victors loud and long.
They will raise the Blue and Gold
Where it waved in days of old.
Then a cheer, my boys, and join us in our song.

Tramp, tramp, tramp, old Queen's victorious,
Ever valiant in the fray.
And we'll give a rousing cheer
For the team that knows no fear.
Then for Queen's, my boys, hurray, hurray, hurray!

When it was all over Frank and Jimmy and Lewis climbed the stairs to No. 18 and found David where they had left him.

"It was like fairy-land," cried David, as Jimmy and Frank came in. "Looking down from here it was like a long fire-snake twisting and turning up and down the walks."

"How about the cheering?" asked Jimmy.

"It sounded wonderful coming up through the branches. I'm so glad I came up after all. I had made up my mind not to go to school because I felt I would be in the way," and he looked down at his twisted and misshapen limbs, and there was a tremor in his voice. "But just the same, I'm glad I came. I can't take part in all the fun, but it will be good to see it from the window."

"Go along with you," said Frank, going over to David and slipping his arm around his shoulder. "In a little while you'll be taking your part

just the same as any of us, and you won't have to watch from the window as you say."

"What could I do?" wailed David.

"There are lots of things you can do. Maybe you can write for the *Mirror*."

"That, we'd have you know, is the sparkling weekly of Queen's," broke in Jimmy.

"Yes," said Frank; "you might stamp your name forever on the history of Queen's athletics by writing a good football song, and who knows but they might erect a monument to your memory, because we're a little shy on good songs."

"I've been thinking of trying myself," said Lewis, "now that I've given football up for more serious things."

"Because football's given you up, you mean," slung in Jimmy, "for better things!"

"But I can never do anything in athletics like you fellows," said David wistfully. "It would be such fun."

"I'm not so sure you can't do any athletics," said Frank. "To-night I happened to meet Patsy, he's our trainer, you know, and instructor in the gym as well. I told him about you and he said you might go into the gym, and if you develop

strength in your arms there are lots of things you could do."

"What, for instance?" inquired David, brightening up at the possibility of taking part in any of the sports which he had thought all closed to him forever.

"Well, Patsy said there was the gymnastic work, parallel bars, horizontal bars, flying rings and rope climbing. The champion of the school gets a big 'Q' on a white sweater just the same as the football fellows. And he said you might make a good coxswain of the crew. Lots of things for you to do, so cheer up."

"I'll see about it right away. I've always been strong in my arms and hands, probably because of these things," indicating the crutches. "You see my poor legs are not very heavy," and he caught the arms of the chair in which he was sitting, and raised himself with the greatest of ease, swinging his body clear of the seat and swaying backwards and forwards.

"I say," said Jimmy, "wouldn't it be great if David got his 'Q' before any of us?"

"Guess there's no real danger of my being burdened with a 'Q' for a while," said David laughing. "But I'll train up and be ready for it if a

'Q' should be flying around looking for some pleasant place to nest."

"We're all looking that way and would be most willing to offer a nest to this much-desired but elusive letter. Jimmy is the most likely of us if he doesn't break his neck before the Warwick game," said Frank.

"Come on, Fatty," cried Jimmy, after the boys had chatted for a half hour. "We must be going to our model apartment up the road, and let these old cronies get to bed. I've got to keep good hours, you know."

"Speaking of beds, you see how I've fixed my room," said Frank, leading the way to the chamber. "We got them to put another couch in here alongside of mine, right by the window. From here we can look out and see you fellows laboring any fine afternoon. The football field is right over there," added Frank, pointing. He broke off short. "Gee whiz," he cried suddenly, "what's that?" The others crowded up close to the window and looked in the direction indicated by Frank's finger.

The moon was shining brightly, the stars twinkled brilliantly, and the trees and the football stands threw dense black shadows on the grass

which at that distance looked like a pall of black velvet. But what caught and held their attention was in the middle distance between themselves and the silvery line of the river, where a white shrouded figure moved rapidly along. It looked like a woman dressed completely in white, but the garments hung from the head rather than from the shoulders, and seemed to flow out behind.

"It's a ghost," whispered Lewis, his scalp beginning to stretch with the rising hairs. The boys watched the thing intently. It did not seem to walk but rather to glide along about five or six feet from the ground. Suddenly it turned from its course parallel to the river, and started to come in the direction of the dormitory. It came on and on until within perhaps a hundred yards of the foot of the slightly higher ground on which the dormitories were built, and then swung away off in the direction of the football stands and disappeared as suddenly as it had come, while they stood watching with fascinated eyes.

Frank was the first to recover himself.

"Well, if that doesn't beat the Dutch," he said, turning a puzzled face to his companions. Lewis was positively blue with fear.

"I thought the thing was coming right up the bank," he said.

"Yes, you grabbed me as if you had been a drowning man and I had been a straw," said Jimmy.

"You did some grabbing yourself," retorted Lewis, beginning to recover himself now that the apparition had gone.

"Well, I'll admit the blooming thing did startle me, all right. Must have been a shadow," said Frank. "The moon plays funny tricks with shadows at night."

"It wasn't a shadow," remarked David, "because I distinctly saw a black shadow following the thing, whatever it was; and if it had been a shadow it certainly wouldn't have cast a shadow, would it?"

The boys stood at the window for half an hour looking for another visitation of the spook or ghost, or whatever it was, but the field appeared to be deserted. There was only the moonlight on the grass, the black shadows and the katydids calling mournfully to each other the old, old refrain. Then Lewis and Jimmy made their departure, the former keeping very close to Jimmy as they headed for their own room. Un-

consciously they quickened their steps and occasionally looked fearfully over their shoulders, and on reaching their entry made a break for their room, three steps at a leap.

A little while after Jimmy and Lewis had made their hasty exit to the other end of Warren Hall, Gleason came sauntering up the stairs, and into the room.

"This is our new room-mate, David Powers," said Frank. David and Gleason shook hands.

"Glad to see you," said the Codfish. "Hope you and Web-foot won't get lost in that big room of yours—what's the matter with the both of you?—you look as if you had seen a ghost."

"That's just what we did do."

"Get out, where?"

"Right down there on the meadow."

"Go to bed and have a little sleep, and you'll get over it all right. You're studying too hard."

"I saw it too," chimed David. "There were four of us and we saw it plain as day."

"What was it, the headless horseman or the slaughtering ghost of the Barrows' football team? Did it walk or skate?"

"No, we're telling you the straight goods on this. Jimmy, Lewis, David and I saw it, and

watched it for five minutes. It disappeared down by the river bank. It didn't walk on the ground at all, but seemed to be floating through air."

"Poor fellow, poor fellow," said the Codfish mournfully. "We'll get a doctor in the morning. That algebra has gone to his brain."

"Well, you can believe it or not," said Frank. "We saw it sure enough. It came apparently from the river, and seemed to go back to it down there by the football field.

"By Jove," said the Codfish, after a moment's reflection. "One of the fellows at this school was drowned in the river just a little below the bath-house float three or four years ago, and they recovered his body down there by the football stand. I wonder—— I wish I'd been here."

And Frank and David and Jimmy and Lewis also wondered, and the latter, when he was ready for dreamland took a long, long look out onto the silent playground. "Gee," he said to himself, "and I thought of going down there to-night, it looked so pretty in the moonlight. What do you suppose it could have been?" He took the precaution of closing the window tight that night, leaving only those windows on the yard side of

the rooms open. That night he dreamed that a headless woman dressed all in white stood beside his bed, and offered him her head which she had tucked nicely away under her arm, and when he looked at it more closely, he saw it was a football and not a head at all.

CHAPTER XV.

FRANK WINS HONORS ON THE TRACK.

David very quickly dropped into the school life, just as Frank had done. The two room-mates were always together. David was eager to see everything, and every day found him, after the school work was done, down at the track or the gridiron. He also found time to get acquainted with the muscle building apparatus in the gymnasium. A certain small amount of gymnastic work was required at Queen's, but David had determined to take up some specialty. From the nature of his infirmity those things which could be done with the arms and body were, of course, the only things open to him. Patsy's assistant in the gymnasium, Harry Buehler, took him under his wing, and set him at tasks which would help to develop his arm and shoulder muscles.

"Do you think there's any chance for me to do

anything for the school?" inquired David, shortly after he began his work.

"Why, certainly there is. One of the best athletes we had here three or four years ago was a chap named Bascom. He had bad legs, but the way he could handle himself on the horizontal bar was a caution. He set the record here, too, for rope-climbing. I don't think it will be broken for some time to come."

David made a mental note that if he could develop, he would take a whack at that record, whatever it was. In the meantime he was content to do the simple athletic tasks which were set for him. Frank, who was not much for gymnastic work, preferring the outdoor athletics, came down to see David one day, and found that youngster lying on the mat and raising dumbbells at arm's length.

"Great Scott," he said, "where did you get all that strength? I don't believe I could do that so easily."

David grinned. "Perhaps the explanation is that the strength I haven't got in my legs goes to my arms. I can lift heavier ones than that. Look," and he seized a 25-pound bell and swung it up and down.

Frank was amazed. "I didn't think you had such strength. What will you be when you work a while under Buehler? I'll certainly not get into a fight with you. I'd have no chance at all."

"I guess we will not fight right away," returned David. "But I say, you are in the track games to-morrow, are you not? I noticed a bulletin tacked up on the door giving the entries. Does football stop the afternoon of the games? I see some of the players' names there."

"Yes, they give the pigskin warriors a day off, and some of them take part. The games are chiefly to give Patsy a line on what there is in the incoming class. In order to make it interesting as a contest, every one takes part, the 'Q' men as well as the new men."

"You're going to try the hundred and the broad jump, I see."

"Yes, Patsy says I may be good at one or the other if I live long enough. But I haven't much hopes of myself. I'm too green."

"I'll bet you will make the best of them all," said David enthusiastically.

"Oh, come now, David, no taffy here. It's bad enough for a fellow who can do something to have a swelled head, but when a fellow can't do

anything at all, it's fatal. So don't try to puff me. I won't stay and listen or I may get the big-head microbe. See you later. Don't strain yourself with those big weights. I'm responsible to your dad for your well-being. Ta, ta."

At four o'clock the next afternoon there was a sprinkling of Queen's boys, the non-athletic fellows, down on the stands, to see what the new class was likely to do for the school in the way of track athletics. Queen's had been down in the dumps in this particular line of sport for several years, and it had become almost a habit to lose to Warwick. There was always pretty good material available for the weight events, but for some singular reason no sprinters headed Queen's way. It had become noised about that a new sprinter in the person of Frank Armstrong had been turned up by Patsy, and every one wanted to see just how fast he was.

The first race to be run was the quarter in which there were seven starters. Queen's track was a quarter-mile, and the runners were to start at the middle of the back stretch, and finish down the straightaway. This gave them only one turn, and it was supposed to be easier on that account. Hillard was scratch man on this event. The new

men were given various handicaps—that is, Patsy set them at points from 10 to 20 yards further along, so as to even up their speed with that of Hillard, who had won the event the year before from the best that Warwick had to offer.

"Nothing in that bunch," said a Senior as he looked the fellows over; "they're not strong enough. Look at that skinny Freshman with 20 yards handicap. I'll bet he'll die half way down the stretch."

The little chap he referred to was a slender boy of fourteen, light haired almost to whiteness, and very spindly in his shanks. He had come from some little town in the western part of the state, and was so insignificant looking that no one paid much attention to him in the fall practice. Even Patsy's eye failed to note him. His name was Brown—Tommy Brown.

After Patsy had put all his runners on their marks, he gave the usual preparatory signal for starting, and the pistol snapped. There was a rush of spectators for the end of the straight-away where the runners were to finish. Hillard, sure of himself, and moving rapidly, soon began to overhaul the inexperienced Freshmen. One by one he passed them, and as he swung into the

straightaway with half the distance gone, only two were ahead of him. One of these was the fellow who had run second to Hillard the year before, and the other was Brown, the skinny one.

"Look at that toothpick coming," rose a cry from the watchers. He certainly was "coming" like a locomotive, his thin legs flying and his arms working like flails. A hundred yards from the finish Hillard caught Peckham, but the little whitehead was still legging it ten yards in front of him. And now Hillard settled down to do his best. Slowly he came up on Tommy Brown while the school yelled its applause, but those thin, flying shanks still continued to move with unbroken rhythm, and despite Hillard's greatest efforts he could not overhaul the Freshman who, with a great burst of speed, broke the tape six feet ahead of the champion. Immediately there was a babel of voices.

"Hurray for Skinny!"

"New world-beater come to town."

"Hurray for the Freshman!"

"Hard luck, Hillard, old boy."

Patsy who had made a short cut from the start of the quarter to the finish, and got there just in time to see the Freshman's great effort, hurried

after him on the way to the gymnasium, and whispered a word of praise in his ear. Coming back he displayed a stop watch whose hand pointed to 55 3-5 seconds.

"And that's going some for a kid," he said. "I'll make something of him before he gets through at Queen's." And Patsy kept his word, for Tommy Brown not only won points for his school, but when he went to college—— But that's another story.

After the quarter mile came the half, but nothing worth while turned up there. The event was run in slow time, and the Freshmen who were entered made a very poor showing.

Then came the first heat of the hundred yards dash. Twelve runners were entered—among them Frank Armstrong, who was drawn in the first lot to be sent over the distance. As they came from the gymnasium and trotted up to the start, their good points were commented on by the spectators.

"Armstrong looks like a runner," said one. "He has a good step and a good face."

"I don't care about his face," said another of the group, "if he has good legs and knows how to use them."

David and Gleason were perched on the uppermost row of the stand where they could see the entire length of the hundred. David was all excitement. "Do they all run together?" he asked Gleason.

"Oh, no, they run it in heats or trials. It wouldn't be fair to run them all at the same time for they couldn't all get an even start. This track will only accommodate six at one time. First, second and third in each heat qualify for the finals, so you see each runner has to go over the distance twice."

"I see."

"They're getting ready," announced Gleason. "See them getting down on their toes. They're off!"

A white puff of smoke came from the pistol in Patsy's hand, and the sound of the explosion came sharply to their ears. Away at the top of the stretch they saw the runners spring forward.

Down the track they swept for thirty yards, none having any advantage. Then the runner on the pole and Frank began to forge to the front. On they came, nip and tuck, until just near the finish the fellow on the pole made a great effort

and broke the tape four or five feet ahead of Frank. The third man was a step behind Frank.

"Oh, what a pity he couldn't keep up," said David mournfully.

"What's the matter with you? He did exactly right," said Gleason.

"How is that—he was beaten, wasn't he?"

"Yes, my son," replied the Codfish, "he was beaten for first place, but he qualified for the final, and that's all you need. What was the use of his running himself out? You see what an effort the other fellow had to win, didn't you? I told Frank myself to run easy in this first heat even if he only came in third place. Third would have been just as good as where he finished."

Then came the second trial of the hundred immediately on the heels of the first. This was well run, but slower, and it was won by the bandy-legged Herring. A Freshman named King was second, and Wilson, a Sophomore, third.

The mile followed and showed nothing promising, no Freshmen getting nearer than fifth place.

"Didn't expect anything, anyway," said Patsy. "A fellow has to learn to run the mile." But in the hurdle trials Tommy Brown, the skinny spindle-shanks, surprised everybody by gallop-

ing off with first place, beating out Morris, the Junior hurdler. In the finals, however, Morris got back at him and won, but the Freshman made him stretch himself to the limit. Patsy was as happy as a lark at finding such youngsters.

"This Freshman class has some good stuff in it," he said, "the best that has come to Queen's for many moons. Armstrong and Brown are going to be corkers, you mark my words. Just watch Armstrong in the hundred. For a kid who has had no experience he is a wonder."

"All out for the finals of the hundred," cried Patsy's assistant, who was helping to run off the events. The summons brought out the six who had been successful in the trials—Collins, Herring, Armstrong, King, Wilson, and a Junior named Howard. The latter two were not expected to figure very heavily in the race.

"Collins and Herring will run scratch in this race," said Patsy, who was getting the six ready up at the start. "You two Freshmen go to that six-foot handicap mark; Howard and Wilson, you take an extra yard."

The boys went to their places, and there was a false start, but on the next attempt they got away splendidly. The first spring took Frank

ahead of King, and he never saw him again until the race was over, but Collins, who had got a magnificent start, had made up most of the distance in the first thirty yards. Frank felt him at his elbow, and determined not to let him pass that point. On they flew. The spectators were crowding out on the track and craning their necks. Collins was running desperately for his reputation as the best sprinter in the school was at stake. He had come up on Frank inch by inch, but every inch was hard won. The crowd was close above them now and shouting:

"Collins!"

"Armstrong!"

"The Freshman's winning!"

"Gee, what a race!"

Inch by inch Collins gained till he was even with Frank, but past him he could not get. Frank was running with every ounce of power in his body, and still held on. He could see the little red line across his path at the finish now, and in another instant he felt the touch of it on his breast. But at the same instant Collins touched it, too.

"A dead heat, a dead heat," shouted the crowd. The boys had crossed the line exactly together.

"Good, Freshman!"

"That's the boy, Armstrong."

And half a score of his own class surrounded Frank and patted him on the back. The effort had been so great that he could hardly stand, and he was glad enough when Jimmy and Lewis took him by the shoulders and let him rest some of his weight on them, but he soon recovered a bit. Herring, who was third, and Collins came up and gave him a kindly word, and Patsy said when Frank had started for the gym, "There is a game kid, I tell you. When he knows how to run, as I mean he shall, you will all take off your hats to him. I guess we will have something to send down to the Interscholastics in New Haven next spring after all."

CHAPTER XVI.

WARWICK INVADES QUEEN'S.

It was the morning of the closing football game of the Queen's School schedule, Saturday, November 12, and recitations were hurried the least little bit. Even the teachers felt the excitement of the day. This was shown by the generous disposition to overlook poor lessons for at least one morning of the school year, and some of them even cut the hours short.

David, who had interviewed the Doctor and taken his place with his class the first of the week, felt the thrill of enthusiasm, and was burning for the slow hours to drag along till 2 o'clock when the great contest was to be called. Football was literally in the air, for everywhere in the school yard, where there was a chance for it between the recitations, groups of boys were gathered and footballs flew high from vigorous toes, and there was the resounding thwack as the ball

dropped in some fellow's arms thirty yards away from the kicker.

It was an ideal day for the game—just a little nip of frost in the air, the merest suggestion of the coming winter, but this was tempered by a bright, warm sun. It was not so warm that the players would be exhausted by the heat, nor was it so cold that spectators were put to the inconvenience and discomfort of heavy wraps.

About noon the invading hosts of Warwick began to reach the Queen's School, and spread themselves about the grounds, flaunting the red and black colors of Warwick. Here and there groups of boys from the two schools gathered together, and there was some little fraternizing, but as a general thing the black and red and the blue and gold did not mix well. The rivalry between the two schools in everything was intense, and the members of each thought the other school just a little inferior in most things.

This feeling sometimes resulted in blows being struck and blood shed from bruised noses when encounters took place between representatives of the two away from school grounds. But to-day was the day of the year, and while rivalry was strong, the feeling of antagonism was held in

check, for wasn't Queen's the host to-day, and Warwick the guest? No blood should be shed this day except on the fair field of battle—the gridiron.

"What's the matter, Jimmy?" said Frank to that individual, whom he chanced to meet hurrying along the path in front of Warren Hall. "Have you seen that ghost again?"

"No, but I'm pretty nervous."

"Been losing sleep over the apparition?"

"Oh, shucks, no. The old ghost doesn't bother me, but I just met Horton and he told me that he may put me in before the game is over. I'm scared to death."

"And what's to worry you about that? I thought that's what you wanted most of anything on this green, grassy earth."

"Well, I do, but what would happen if I didn't make good?"

"Oh, don't worry about that, you'll be Johnny on the spot, I'm willing to bet. And if you get in, you'll get your 'Q.' Just think of it—your first year!"

"I'm not thinking of the 'Q' so much as whether I can do what I've got to do. I feel

just like I did that day when you and I swam at the water carnival at Turner's Point last summer—shaky all over."

Frank grinned as he recalled it.

"I remember that well enough. Before the race came off I was sure that the moment I hit the water I'd go down, and drown, but as soon as I hit the water I thought no more about it. And you will be like that. I tell you it's a big honor to be able to get on the team the first year. Not many Freshmen get the chance. I'm proud to know you, Mr. James Turner."

"Quit your jollying, Frank, and tell me if you've seen the ghost since. You never saw such a scared kid as Lewis was that night, and you couldn't get him down on the playgrounds after eight o'clock if you were to pay him real money."

"Yes," said Frank, "David and I saw it night before last in exactly the same place. It seemed to come from nowhere and disappeared behind the football stand. Seems as if it went into the water. Isn't it queer?"

"It is mighty queer, indeed. What did Gleason say about it?"

"Oh, he wasn't in at the time. He'd gone over

to the library early in the evening, and David and I were alone. When he came in and we told him about it, he said it must surely be the ghost of the drowned boy. He had inquired of old Peter Flipp, the shoemaker up on the hill, and Peter told him that the meadows were what he called 'hanted'."

"Did you see it clearly this time?"

"No, not so clearly as the first time; the moon, you know, is on the wane now, and the grounds were darker, but still light enough to show pretty plainly. It was the same figure, and seemed to move pretty swiftly, faster than a walk, I should say, and slower than a run, and, as before, it was above the ground."

"Well, it beats me," said Jimmy. "I've never heard of anything like it. I must be getting along. Here comes Gleason now. Good-bye, old speed. I'll see you later," and Jimmy turned away, as Gleason came up.

"Telling him what the score is going to be this afternoon, old Web-foot?" inquired Gleason.

"No, Codfish, I was telling him about the second visitation of that thing down on the grounds by the river. When this football season is over,

I'm going to lay for that old ghost or whatever it is."

"Oh, I wouldn't do that," said Gleason, "you don't know what might happen. I've heard of people who tried a hand with ghosts and their hair turned white in a single night from sheer fright. I wouldn't like to see my trusty wife in such a condition as that."

"Just the same I'd like to take a closer look at that thing, and I don't believe I'd be afraid; but at present there is something else to be done, and that's to get something to eat and get down to the grounds in time for a good seat."

"Looks like a big crowd to-day. Guess these Warwickers have all left their happy homes to see the slaughter, and I'm afraid they're not going to be disappointed," said Gleason.

"Oh, don't lose heart, you can't tell. There may be a Freshman in the game before it's through, and that will help a lot." Frank threw this last word over his shoulder to Gleason as he hurried to the dining room. Coming from the hall, after a hastily snatched bite, he overtook the Wee One, and together they journeyed to the gymnasium, where both teams were to dress for the fray, Warwick having been given the big

locker room on the second floor, while Queen's retained the lower floor.

As they approached the gymnasium a big coach drove down the river road in a cloud of dust. It was positively covered with boys. It bore the football eleven of Warwick and its immediate crowd of heelers. Wherever a boy could stick, he had stuck himself, and every one swung the colors of the school.

"Gee whiz, look at those mastodons," cried Wee Willie as the Warwick players began to uncoil themselves from various parts of the coach. "They'll eat us alive. I know they must be cannibals. Poor Queen's, poor Queen's."

"They certainly are whales," said Frank, "but they look a bit logy to me. A good fast team ought to keep them on the jump."

"Yes, but where do you see that good, fast team? It doesn't live hereabouts, does it?"

"Oh, don't get discouraged so early in the game. Wait at least till they've played a few minutes."

By this time the coach had unloaded, and the heelers of the eleven, reinforced by fifty or more boys of those who had come down earlier

in the day, got together and gave the snappy school yell:

"War I wickety-kick,
War I wickety-kick,
Rah, rah, rah, WARWICK."

"They yell as if it were all over, don't they?" observed David, who had just come up.

"There does seem to be something of jubilance in it, that's a fact," said the Wee One. "And the eleven is certainly big enough to give the York Freshmen a rub if weight amounts to anything. Come on, we'd better get to our places, the stand is filling up."

Every one around the country-side within a radius of ten miles was present. Country lads and lassies making a holiday of it; fond papas and mammas to see Charlie or Freddie or Tommy take his part in the game. And mamma was very shivery about what might happen to the young man in the conflict so soon to come. And then there were the young beaux of both Warwick and Queen's who had blossomed out into their very best, each with a pretty little maid, perhaps from as far away as Milton, at his side, who simply revelled in the blue and gold or the red and black. Some of the girls even carried the color scheme

into their hats and clothing. And such a hum of talk and such a clatter, as the crowds climbed the wooden bleachers looking for the best vantage points, and such a world of questions for the young beaux to answer the pretty little maidens.

"Oh, dear," says one fair questioner, "what are those white H's at each end of the field for?"

"White what?" says the escort.

"Those big wooden things like an H—two straight pieces, and another across the middle; it looks like an H. What does it stand for?"

"Stand for, stand for, why it stands to get kicked at. It's the goal post, Minnie."

"O, stupid, I should have known. And those little white lines. I suppose they're out if they run across them."

"Of course they are," says the escort, busy watching the corner of the field where the teams make their appearance, and not comprehending what she says.

But Frank, the Wee One, David and Gleason have no attachments of any kind. Frank had written an urgent letter to his father and mother to come up, but Mrs. Armstrong was not very well, and could not make the trip, and Mr. Arm-

strong was too busy at the office. "Will come up when you are on the team," was the answer. And the quartet were all very well satisfied to see the game this way.

Suddenly there was a great waving of red and black flags as the Warwick eleven came lumbering onto the field with Captain Channing at their head. A burst of cheering rolled up. The snappy Warwick yell floated out over the field and then a rollicking song.

In the middle of the song up rose the whole Queen's side of the stand and let out a roar, for the Queen's team was seen coming 'way down by the far end. Their quick movements were in sharp contrast to the heavier Warwicks. And as the school saw their active prancing, a feeling came from somewhere that after all the hard knocks they might win to-day. The cheer leaders were busy pumping melody out of the bunch on the stands:

"What are you doing, whispering? Get into it and let's hear you. It's as silent out here as the town of Milton on a summer afternoon." This brought a laugh, for Milton was not noted for its activity at any time of the year. And they got into the song which the cheer leader called for.

Both teams were, meanwhile, going through a brief practice in signal drill.

"My, how Channing boots that ball—see it soar!" cried Frank, and soar it did. Channing was a remarkable punter for a schoolboy, and every kick he sent off was labelled danger for the catching backs.

"Jimmy is not in the line-up," observed the Wee One to Frank.

"No, didn't expect he would be at first, but I think he'll get in, for I don't believe Hillard will last long. He was never very good as a defensive player anyway."

"Horton wants to put him in anyway at the first of the game so as to get the best of his speed. Good plan, too."

"Think it is a mistake," ventured the Cod-fish, "because these fellows from up the river are going to slam-bang that line of ours, and they'll need all the defence they can get, and on defense Turner is about twice as good as Hillard. If I were coaching I'd put my best backs in and try to stop these fellows' fire, and then when I had them stopped I'd put in my fast fellows and run around them."

"There's wisdom in what you say, Solomon,

but as you're not the coach, you can't give us a demonstration, and Mr. Horton will."

By this time the teams had finished their signal drill, and gathered each in a little knot while the captains went out to midfield to toss the coin for position on the field.

"There she goes," said the Wee One. "Bet you Queen's gets it."

"You lose," said Gleason, "Warwick got it and Channing's taking the wind at his back. Oh, my, oh, my! That's bad, right off the bat."

The Warwick captain had elected to take the wind, and the breeze now blowing would be a considerable help to him. The sun affected neither, as the football field lay nearly north and south.

"There we go," cried Frank, as a piercing whistle announced the beginning of hostilities.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE GREAT FOOTBALL GAME.

From the powerful toe of Mitchell, the right guard on the Warwick eleven, the ball, which he had carefully set at the center of the field, went flying directly between the goal posts. It was a wonderful kick, and a great yell rose from the Warwick sympathizers, who believed that Warwick had scored so soon.

"What are they shouting about?" said the Codfish, contemptuously. "They'd better read the rule book. It isn't a score."

"It went between the posts, fair and square," said David.

"Oh, but you can't score a goal from a kick-off," said Frank. "The ball will have to come back,—there, you see the referee is bringing it back to the center of the field. Mr. Mitchell will have to do it over again."

"You're wrong again," said the Codfish. "It's

a touchback, and Queen's brings it out to the 25-yard line."

It was now Queen's time to cheer, and the Warwick crowd, which had jumped excitedly to its feet, sat down, the points they supposed they had made having suddenly been taken away from them, as they thought.

"It simply makes me sick the way some of the people who attend football games show their ignorance of the first principles of the game. They couldn't tell an off-side play from a woolly dog. Wow! there she goes," as the ball rose from Queen's kick-out and carried on a long, slicing drive away down towards the side of the field. But Warwick punted on first down and sent it once more into Queen's goal.

"That's going to be a hard one to get back," said the Wee One. "It doesn't give our fellows much chance to dodge, it dropped so close to the side lines. Hillard's got it, Hillard's got it!"

"Good boy, Hillard!" shouted every one, for that individual, by twisting and squirming, had carried it from Queen's 10-yard line diagonally across the field to the 25-yard line, where he was stopped from behind when a clear field was almost

in sight. It was a pretty run, and brought the ball out of danger for a little while.

There was great excitement in both stands as the two teams lined up for the scrimmage. Frank found himself holding onto the seat desperately as the lines crouched, and his jaw was chattering. He could see out of the corner of his eye the tense look on the faces of the other fellows.

"Crash!" went the lines. There was a quick pass from Chip to Dutton, and the latter went into the line head first in what ought to have been a hole but wasn't, for the tackle didn't make it for him, and the result was that he got no further than his tackle's heels, and was there piled under a heap.

"Second down, ten yards to gain," shouted the referee.

"Nothing doing," cried Gleason. "They're as solid as a rock. I wonder if Chip will try it again before kicking."

They had not long to wait, for in another instant Hillard was off for a run at left, and with the ball securely tucked under his arm. Hillard ran behind a good interference which kept him from turning in, but when 20 yards had been covered in a straight run across the field, he

left his interference, and took his chance on an open space which had just offered. The quick change of direction bothered him, he slipped and fell, rolled head over heels for a yard or two, and was pinned down to the earth by the big Warwick half-back.

"Didn't make it, did he?"

"Guess not; they're going to measure." The linesmen ran out with their chain while the two teams gathered to watch the proceedings. Then the men with the chain straightened up, and ran back to the sidelines again while Queen's prepared for a scrimmage, and the Warwick defence backfield scampered backwards as hard as they could go.

"Queen's ball and they are going to kick. Only a little to gain, but they don't dare take the chance. Good judgment, Mr. Dixon," said Frank.

"We'd put him in a mad-house if he did anything else, particularly with those big farmers. Twenty-five-yard line's too near your own roost to monkey with fate," growled Gleason.

Wheeler got off a rattling good kick which carried to the middle of the field, travelled high and dropped straight. The Warwick back was deceived. He expected it to go farther than it did

and was not under it when it came down. There was a great mix-up, and when the dust cleared away Captain Harding was found on the ball. Queen's ball on the enemy's territory! How Queen's did yell! Warwick's red and black flags were as quiet as death now that the blue and gold waved jubilantly.

"Well, if they do that every now and then we may get one over on them. Come on now and get into this, Queen's," shouted the Wee One. He was all excitement, now that there seemed to be a chance, and one listening to him would think he was running the eleven from his position on the stand. Frank was scarcely less excited, but he kept control of his tongue.

Dutton slammed into centre for three yards, and then in the same place made more than enough for a first down. Again Chip drove him at center, but this time the Warwick backs came a little closer up and smothered Dutton when his head went through the line.

"No gain that time, was there?" queried Frank.

"No, the chump might have seen those backs coming in a bit if he'd used his eyes. Wonder if he thought they were going to keep on leav-

ing the door for him there at centre? What's up, I wonder?" he added, for the Queen's team had gathered around their captain, with their heads together. "Some trick play they're going to pull off. They'd better stick to the good old bucking since it's going well."

But the critics upon the bleachers were deceived,—it was not a trick play then, at any rate, for the next play Chip sent against the enemy was a delayed pass with Hillard taking the ball. He had a big hole, and went for it fast, but somehow, without any one being near him, he managed to drop the ball. It struck the ground in plain view of every one, but, providentially for him, bounced up into his hands, and on he went without the slightest check. The delay in making the pass had unsettled the Warwickians, who expected something entirely different, and before they could recover Hillard had gone fifteen yards. The Warwick quarter, who was the only player between Hillard and a touchdown, threw him hard. Queen's yells broke out afresh, and now the Warwick cheering section began to get busy, calling out in unison:

"Hold them, hold them, hold them!"

"Gee whiz! if Hillard doesn't stop those circus

stunts," said the Wee One, "you might as well send for the ambulance right away. I'll die of heart failure. Did you ever see such luck that he recovered it?"

"They ought to put tacks to his fingers, and see if they couldn't get him to hold the ball that way," grumbled Gleason.

"A basket would be better for him."

"No, it wouldn't, he'd lose the basket."

The ball now lay about Warwick's 35-yard line, and so far Queen's had all the best of the battle, but it must be admitted that Queen's also had had all the luck. But by good luck and some skill the eleven had made good progress, and it really began to appear as if they could hold the big fellows from up the river. The hope in the Queen's stand was doomed to quick disappointment, for on the next play Dutton made a scant yard just outside of tackle, and Boston Wheeler could do no better than another yard through the weak centre. It was third down and yards still to go, so Dixon signalled a drop kick.

"It's all off now," groaned the Codfish, "we haven't a drop kicker on the whole squad. More's the pity."

"Well, let's all pray that he gets it over even

if he kicks it with his knee. They're getting ready. Steady now. Oh, Lord,—hurray, hurray, it's over!"

The ball came straight and fast, and although the Warwick players seemed to be surging all around and over him, Boston Wheeler somehow got it away, a most slovenly kick, but the ball rose out of the ring of grasping arms, and went in a wobbling fashion in the direction of the goal, struck on the cross-bar and jumped over.

The Queen's cheering section was making the place echo with its yell:

"Rah, rah, rah, Queen's! Rah, rah, rah, Queen's!"

"Well, that helps some," said Frank. "Three points are not to be sneered at, and they came pretty easy, too."

"Oh, my, but what luck!" laughed the Codfish, who had been pounding every one on the back.

"It will probably make those farmers come back harder than ever, and it's early in the game, so don't get too gay yet awhile. They haven't been at it five minutes yet."

The Wee One was right. The score, so unexpected for both sides, drove the big red and black team to desperation, and after the next

kick-off, when the ball came into their possession near midfield, they went at Queen's like wild men, and tore their line to pieces. Wherever their backs hit they made gaping holes, and carried the ball five yards at a jump. Queen's fought with great determination, and as the enemy ploughed along they found it harder going as they neared the Queen's goal line. Most of the advance was made on Hillard's side of the line, where the Warwick quarter found gains could be made the easiest. He was not slow to take advantage of the opportunity.

Finally the ball lay on the Queen's ten-yard line. Warwick was confident, and crouched for the trial, but something went wrong with the signals, and there was a loss of a yard. Big Henderson, the right half of the Warwick team, who had a reputation for being able to bore through anything short of a stone wall, was called upon, and smashed through the Queen's left side and made four of the necessary yards before he was pulled down by main force. It was third down and several yards to the goal line.

"Will they try to carry it, do you think?" David asked.

"Guess they don't know themselves," answered the Codfish, "they're talking it over. If I were running the team I'd slam into the line again, although it ought to be an easy drop kick for Channing."

"They'll try to carry it, of course," cut in the Wee One; "see, they're getting ready; Henderson's going to take the ball, bet you a horse and cart."

He was right. Henderson did take the ball. He dove head first into the hole that was offered for him, and tried to sidestep Dutton, who was coming at him like a bull. He could not avoid the tackle, however. Dutton knocked the pins clean from under him, and he came down on his elbow with so great a shock that the ball flew from his arms, and bounded away toward the goal line. Half a dozen forms dived for it, but Harding, being fortunately near at the moment, reached it first and hugged it to his breast.

It was a narrow escape, for when the two teams lined up a moment later the ball was placed on the ground only two feet away from the Queen's goal, but it was Queen's ball. The Queen's sympathizers breathed easier for a while.

Boston Wheeler had to go far behind his own

line to kick, and Channing, who was playing back now for Warwick, received the ball from Wheeler's punt on the Queen's 25-yard line. He made no gain, as the two ends were on him almost as soon as the ball touched his fingers.

Now Warwick began all over again, harder than ever. It was two yards here, five in another place, and in almost as short a time as it takes to tell it, the ball was back in dangerous territory. In spite of every effort that Queen's could put forth, the big full-back, Channing, tore through the last yards, with Henderson at his back, and fell across the goal line just outside of the post. And now it was the turn of the red and black flags to wave, and the cheers which rent the air had something of jubilance in them, because Warwick had been able to cross the line, while Queen's could only score by drop-kicks, and, moreover, Warwick was two points in the lead, but only that, for the goal from touchdown failed. Her sympathizers had good reason to cheer.

"There's no doubt about it, Warwick is stronger than we are, and only more luck like we had at the beginning and then some more luck, will save us," said the Wee One gloomily.

For the remainder of the period the battle

raged up and down the field, Warwick always the aggressor. Lack of concerted action was the chief fault of Queen's, and the captain did not seem to be able to pull his men together.

When the whistle blew to end the period, the team walked off to the gymnasium to be freshened up by their handlers. The score stood 3 to 5 against Queen's.

"Like Files on Parade, in Kipling's 'Danny Deever,' 'I'm dreadin' wot I got to watch' this next period," said the Wee One. "Danny Deever" was his favorite verse and he was fond of quoting it.

"Will Jimmy go in this second period, do you think?" David inquired.

"I don't know, but I hope so. I hope he gets a chance, and certainly Hillard hasn't distinguished himself to-day."

But when the teams came out for the second period, Hillard and Dutton were still the backs. Ends of the field having been changed again, Warwick had the wind, which was now breezing up considerably.

From the minute the whistle blew Warwick became the aggressor and Queen's was constantly on the defensive. Once or twice Queen's had

the ball and attempted to carry it, but there was no unity in the play, and they were obliged to give it up with a punt. But somehow they managed to stave off the bigger team, helped along considerably by the latter's blunders and fumbles. The third period went in much the same way and play had been going on for five minutes of the last quarter when Warwick began to get things running to suit them. Then they began an irresistible advance. Twice Channing got around Harding's end for a pretty run. The Queen's captain seemed to be dazed. When he began to go to pieces, his team followed him.

Warwick had advanced to the Queen's 15-yard line and on the third down, having two yards to go, prepared for a drop-kick. But the preparation was only a fake, for on a quick pass, Channing, seeing his opportunity, made a long, sweeping end run, cleared an outlying end, threw off Chip, raced behind the goal, and touched the ball down.

Of course, there was a great jubilation, for the score was now 10 to 3, and when the goal was kicked a few minutes later, still another point was added.

As the team trudged back up the field to take their positions for the next kick-off, Hillard was seen walking wearily towards the sidelines.

"There's your friend the Turner, my old wife, going in," observed the Codfish. "Now things will be different. Eh, what?"

"Too late, I'm afraid. Jimmy's good, but he can't play the whole game." But Jimmy came pretty near to playing the whole game, as Warwick found out. Wherever they shot their backs toward the line the Freshman was there to meet the charge. He tackled everywhere, and when he got his arms around a Warwick leg there was no further advance just then. It was wonderful to see that red shock of hair flying from point to point, defending the weak places. Warwick had penetrated Queen's territory half a dozen times, only to be held up when they thought they were about to score, and principally by Jimmy's wonderful defensive work.

Finally, after one of these charges down the field, it was Queen's ball on downs on her own 20-yard line. Time was passing rapidly, and there seemed very little hope of any more scoring. Warwick was pretty tired, and Queen's

was so badly disorganized that they couldn't make anything go. In desperation Chip sent Dutton against the line, but he was slammed back, and Jimmy, without any one to help him, suffered the same fate. Now he tried Jimmy at the Warwick right end.

A new player had just gone in there, and Chip figured that it might be good policy to shoot a play at him before he got his bearings. And it was good judgment. Jimmy got away like a flash, Dutton acted as interference for a few steps, but he was too logy, and Jimmy cut away from his interference, bearing well out across the field. The faster players of Warwick eleven followed him out, and the slower ones, believing he would be run out of bounds, did not follow very hard. Consequently, a considerable gap was left in the line of defensive.

Quick as a flash Jimmy dashed into the gap, dodging and twisting as arms reached for him, but he was through. Between him and the goal was only the Warwick quarter away down the field. Seeing Jimmy headed for him, the quarter came up to meet him, confident that he would stop him. Jimmy changed his direction a little, and bore off for the sideline, so as to draw the

quarter in that direction. His trick was successful, for the quarter edged over to that side, expecting to run him out of bounds. Then when the wide, unprotected field was upon Jimmy, he swung to the left again, sidestepping the waiting arms neatly.

Behind him thundered the whole of the Warwick eleven, and he imagined he could feel their hot breaths on his neck, and their hands on his body. But he threw his last ounce of energy into the business in hand, and ran on, holding onto that ball like grim death. Now he was only two chalk lines away, now one; a heavy body struck him, knocking him off his legs, but he struck the ground like a rubber ball, and rolled over and over across the goal line with that precious ball hugged tightly to his breast. It was a touchdown.

Pandemonium reigned. Never had such a run been seen on Queen's field, and it had been accomplished by a Freshman.

"Turner, Turner!" yelled the crowd, and they kept it up while the goal was being kicked. A few minutes after the next kick-off, the whistle blew ending the contest, and although Queen's had lost, the crowd swept down from the stand

and carried the embarrassed Jimmy, the cause of all the racket, around and around the gridiron on their shoulders. It was a great afternoon for Freshman Turner, and the sting of defeat was forgotten by the whole school in the performance of one of its younger members.

CHAPTER XVIII.

GAMMA TAU RECEIVES A SHOCK.

It was two weeks after the great game with Warwick, and things in Queen's School had settled down into their normal condition. The election of the captain had taken place a few days after the closing game, and the choice was on Boston Wheeler, the fullback. The school did not particularly like the choice, although Wheeler was really a fair player, and had, while he was a member of Gamma Tau, showed himself to be a man of rather good judgment.

"He's the best of the bunch," announced the Wee One, who had kept up the friendship with Frank and his friends. The Wee One had just now dropped into Frank's room to talk over the situation.

"Do you think he'll make a good leader?" questioned Frank.

"Yes, if he doesn't take too much advice from

Chip Dixon. It's a sure thing that as long as Dixon is on the eleven he will work it for his friends, and he will work Wheeler for his friends."

"It's queer to me," said Frank, "that as bright as he is about most things, he can't see where his playing favorites hurts himself, and the team and the school. Although Jimmy was better than Hillard, he fought him off as long as he could. I believe if Jimmy had been in that game all through it the score would have been different. What do you think?"

"Yes, I think the score would have been smaller for Warwick, but Jimmy alone couldn't have stopped it. The trouble was with the captain. He couldn't pull his men together when the test came. They played good ball in spots, but they had it in them to play it all the time. Gamma Tau is responsible for the poor athletic showing here at Queen's. And, speaking of Gamma Tau, have you heard that they are pledging for the March elections?"

"No, I hadn't heard. Are they?"

"Yes. I've been wondering if they've called on you."

"Me? Gracious! You know that Chip Dixon

would rather stick me than have me in Gamma Tau," said Frank.

"Perhaps so, but he isn't all of the Society. There are some good fellows in it, and they don't take his view. What would you do if it were offered to you, Frank?"

"I don't want it, and I wouldn't take an election."

"Yes, but Alpha Beta is the only other; you're sure to get asked by their scouts. I wonder they haven't been around yet."

"I don't want Alpha Beta either. I don't see that it is necessary for me to be in a society, is it? What good is Alpha, anyway?"

"Well, it's made up of the left-overs from Gamma Tau, as I told you when you came here. It hasn't any weight. It's the Gamma that is the Colossus around whose legs we all crawl."

"I'm not going to crawl around Gamma Tau. I don't like what it stands for, so I'm going to stand for myself. I can get along without it."

"Hear, hear, fine sentiments from Mr. Frank Armstrong. Hurray for high morality——"

The Wee One was interrupted by the opening of Frank's door. Jimmy entered.

"Hello," he said, "glad to see you. Hope I'm not intruding."

"Oh, not at all. We were just talking about Gamma Tau and her scouts who are out pledging for the elections."

"Well, that's just what I came over here to talk to Frank about."

"I'll be going then," said the Wee One, sliding down from the window seat.

"No, don't," cried Jimmy. "You're just the Solomon whose advice I need. You are bowed down with the wisdom of the ages. Stay where you are."

"I'm on my pedestal again," announced the Wee One when he had climbed back to his commanding position. "Fire away, and I'll pass judgment with the help of the whole jury, Frank Armstrong. Have they asked you to come into the fold?"

"That's just it. Cuthbert, of the baseball team, and another fellow I don't know, came around half an hour ago and asked to see me alone. They fired poor Lewis out of the room, locked the door, and then began to ask me fool questions about myself. I didn't know what they were driving at, but after a while Cuthbert

stopped beating around the bush, and asked me how I'd like to wear a Gamma Tau pin."

"And you said you'd rather have a rose," interjected the Wee One.

"No, I didn't. I just said I hadn't thought about it. Apparently he had the notion that I should have fallen head-over-heels into the plan. I hadn't been thinking about any such possibility, and I sat there like a dummy."

"And what happened? You are killing me with impatience!"

"Well, they began to tell me some of the advantages of belonging to it——"

"And some of the disadvantages of not belonging, eh?"

"No, they just hinted at those," said Jimmy, smiling. "They said that I had made a good showing in football——"

"No credit to them," snorted Frank.

"And that if I kept on there would be a good chance for me to make the captaincy, if I came into Gamma Tau."

"They emphasized the IF, I suppose?" inquired the Wee One.

"Well, it was a little like that. They intimated

that with Gamma Tau behind me I could have anything I wanted."

"Yes, that's exactly what they think. But maybe there'll be a change some of these fine days."

"Well," said Jimmy, "I'm here for advice. What do you think I ought to do?"

"Don't you know what to do?" said Frank.

"I think I do, but I don't want to make mistakes, and I thought I'd like to talk it over with some one. My own notion is that Gamma Tau can go hang. I don't like the bunch that is in Gamma Tau, and I don't like the way they are running things in this school."

"You don't mean to say that another Freshman has chucked down poor old Gamma Tau?" said the Wee One, in what he pretended was an awe-struck whisper. "Frank here, has just been firing hot shot into them. It's a rebellion of the Freshman class, that's what it is, I tell you."

"Quit your jollying, Patty," said Jimmy. "Before Cuthbert and the other fellows got out of my room I told them that I guessed I'd take a chance on staying out, and if I couldn't make good on merits I'd have to make bad. They said not to make up my mind in a hurry, and that they'd see me again."

"A throw-down for the Gammas. Hurrah, hurroo! But it's all off with you now. You have digged your grave, as they say in Shakespeare; it's your athletic grave. You're as good as dead now. Go and buy a nice, sweet little headstone and mark it: 'Sacred to the memory of the rising athletic hopes of James Turner. Erected by the Gamma Tau Society.'"

It seemed like a dread prophecy to both the boys, who had come to the school hoping that they might be able to do something for the school besides their school work, something to help the honor of the school on field or river, and silence fell for a time on the gay talk. As they sat there, steps were heard on the stairs.

"S-s-s-h!" whispered the Wee One. "I'll bet a dollar it's the Gamma scouts come to have a whack at Frank. Jimmy, you and I hide." They sprang from their seats and scampered to Frank's bedroom, where they drew the curtain, from behind which they could hear everything that might go on in the room. The Wee One's guess was good, for the two were scarcely concealed when the footsteps stopped at the door, and there was a knock. Frank had snatched a book from the table and placed himself in the attitude of study.

"Come in," he called.

The door opened and in walked the Gamma scouts, Cuthbert and his friend.

"Sit down," said Frank courteously, rising and offering his visitors chairs.

"What did I tell you?" whispered the Wee One to Jimmy. "They're after your young friend."

"How do you like Queen's?" was Cuthbert's first query. "Pretty good place, isn't it?"

"I haven't been here very long," said Frank, "but I think it's fine. If we only had some good athletic teams here! Seems to be a dandy bunch of fellows."

"Yes, I guess it's one of the best schools in this part of the country," said Cuthbert. "We are not so big as Andover nor Hotchkiss nor Hill School, but size isn't always the best thing. We are closer together than these big schools, and in a small school all the best fellows get together easier." Cuthbert settled himself in his chair, and threw back his coat, displaying the handsome Gamma Tau pin on his waistcoat. It was a well-known thing that a glimpse of the Gamma pin had often settled the case of the doubting ones,

when it flashed its radiant message to the candidate.

But it did not dazzle Frank the least little bit.

"Yes," he said, "we have everything here, I guess, excepting good athletic teams." He said it so innocently that Cuthbert, who looked up quickly, did not know whether he was hinting at Gamma's part in the "good" athletic teams or not. At Frank's words the Wee One gave Jimmy his elbow so hard behind the curtain that that individual staggered and almost lost his balance.

"Well," continued Cuthbert, settling back comfortably, "we might have better teams, and we are going to have them. Things have been breaking badly for us for some time, but there are good times ahead."

"I hope so," said Frank, "we need better times."

Again there was a scraping sound behind the curtains, but Cuthbert, not noticing it, went on: "You have a friend named Turner, who lives in the other end of Warren, haven't you?"

"Yes. He's one of my best friends."

"Well, we want him in Gamma Tau," said Cuthbert, coming straight to the point. "He's a

likely fellow, and we think will make good. In fact, we'd like to have you both come into our fraternity. The first elections are in March. It is considered a very great honor to get a first election. You play baseball, don't you?"

"Yes, a little."

"Pitcher, I hear."

"Yes, pretty poor, though."

"Well, that's all right. You will improve. We want you to be one of us, and to use your influence with Turner. You will be both taken in together. It doesn't often happen to Freshmen. I didn't get my election till my second year, and I thought I was pretty lucky then."

"And you want me to use my influence with Turner?"

"Yes; neither of you know, perhaps, that Gamma controls the school athletics, and it can help a fellow a great deal with the honors of athletics."

"Doesn't a fellow stand as good a chance outside of Gamma as inside?"

"No, I shouldn't say he did. Most of the athletes are with us, and we run things about as we wish them. May we have your word that you

will come along and bring Turner with you? It is a distinct honor, you understand."

"I thank you very much for the honor," said Frank, steadily, looking straight at Cuthbert, who expected a favorable reply, "but I do not care to accept an election. I think Turner has the same opinion."

"But why?" said the amazed Cuthbert.

"According to all I hear, Gamma Tau has been responsible for all the defeats in the school teams for the last three or four years. As you said yourself, you run things to suit yourselves and elect your own captains. It doesn't strike me as the right way to do it. They say a fellow who isn't in Gamma Tau has no chance. If that's the thing that decides it, I guess I'll stay outside."

Cuthbert rose to his feet as though he had sat on a tack, and his friend followed suit. "You'll be sorry for this night, my boy," said he, striding to the door and jerking it open. "I can tell you now that for Freshmen you and your friend Turner have put yourselves in wrong, and if I can help it you will not have another chance."

"Is that all?" said Frank, rising.

"Yes, that's all," shouted Cuthbert, and out they went, and banged the door after them.

The scouts were hardly off the stairs when the Wee One and Jimmy burst forth, holding their sides with laughter. "Hasn't he the nasty temper, though!" cried the Wee One. "Now you're both buried in the same grave. We'll erect a double monument for Turner and you. Wow! but Gamma will be hopping mad."

"Let them," said Frank. "I don't care a hooter. If I can't get on a team without bootlicking that crowd, I'll stay off it."

"Me, too," said Jimmy.

"And me, too," said the Wee One, assuming a dramatic attitude, and thumping his narrow chest. "I wouldn't take the position of football captain from the Gamma if they offered it to me."

At that moment a great clattering was heard on the stairs—some one pounding up in undignified haste.

"They're coming back to capture you," cried the Wee One, "and take you to their lair by main force. Skip." But before any one had time to move, Lewis burst in at the door with his jaw hanging and his eyes popping out of his head.

"The ghost!" he gasped, "the ghost! I was out behind Warren on the bank a minute ago,

and it came walking straight for me, and I beat it for here at a mile a minute."

The boys dashed for the windows which looked out on the meadow and playgrounds. Sure enough, there in the light of the half-moon went the figure in white, sailing over the ground. They all watched it with staring eyes, and while they were looking it stopped, made a small circle, then headed off down behind the football stands and disappeared.

The boys watched till it had gone, and then turned and looked at each other in amazement.

CHAPTER XIX.

AN ENCOUNTER WITH THE MYSTERY.

"Well, if that doesn't beat the Dutch," said Frank, the first to recover his tongue after the thing, whatever it was, had gone from their view.

"Seems to melt right into the air, doesn't it?" exclaimed the Wee One. "I thought when I heard of there being a ghost down on the field that some one was just kidding. What do you suppose it can be?"

"That's what I'd like to know," said Jimmy. "The first time we saw it was the night David came. We happened to be in the bedroom and the thing came just like it did to-night, and then went as quickly as it came. There's no kidding about it. It's something, sure as shooting."

"Let's go and take a look," suggested Frank, looking around the group.

"Not on your life," said Lewis. "I'm not out hunting ghosts to-night. I've got something bet-

ter to do. I've got lessons to get ready. And you'd find nothing, anyway, and maybe the thing would jump out on you. I've heard of such things." And Lewis drew his coat tighter around him and shuddered.

"Jimmy, will you come?" said Frank. "David can stay here and keep watch to see if anything else happens."

"I'll go," said Jimmy.

"Me, too," said the Wee One. "I'm big enough to keep you all out of trouble, and if any ghost dare give me any of its lip"—he drew out his chest and squared off at the imaginary assailant.

"Lewis, you can stay here with David if you want to do your lessons, but be sure you shut the window, for I've known of ungentlemanly ghosts stepping right in through one if they happened to find it open," said Jimmy.

"Are you afraid, David?"

"No, indeed," said David. "Besides, I'm not alone. Isn't Lewis here to take care of me if anything should come? But I guess we'll be all right. You are the only fellows that are likely to get into danger."

The boys started off at once, and soon reached

the field by way of the path down the hill. They headed for a clump of trees by the boat-house, near which they had first seen the Thing. The crescent moon had dropped considerably, and the light was dim enough, but they held bravely on. Once Jimmy stepped on a twig of something, which snapped under his foot, and the three boys almost leaped into the air.

"Gee! how you scared me," said Frank.

"I'd have run if I hadn't been stuck to the spot," said the Wee One. "Please watch out where you step and don't do it again. My nerves are bad, with all the hard work I've been through this fall." They got another start as a night bird whirred up from the branches of the big elm nearby, but as Frank was determined to go on, the other two would not leave him.

Presently they stood on the boat-house float and peered all around. There was no sound but the gurgle of the river as it flowed past, dark and silent. A little white mist was rising from the water, and the place was damp and chill. Even the song of the frogs, which might have lent a little cheerfulness to the place, was hushed. They listened and looked, but they might

have been on a desert island in the middle of the Pacific.

"Gee whiz, it's a melancholy looking place; let's get back," said the Wee One. "Whatever the thing is, it isn't here. I'd rather be up on the hill. Let's go."

"Hold on there," said Frank. "I'm trying to trace the course of the Thing. Down here we can't see the dormitory lights, and I don't think we can see them till we get through that bunch of trees. Consequently we couldn't see anything that was here if we were in our room."

"No, we couldn't, but what has that got to do with it?" said the Wee One, impatiently. "We'll get our deaths of cold here." But the shiver that the Wee One gave was not entirely from the cold. Now that he was on it, the mission that looked like a lark from the comfortably lighted room in the dormitory took on a different aspect.

Frank was already leaving the float, where there seemed to be no sense in staying longer. He climbed the path up the bank and went out into the open field.

"There," he said, "you can see our light. It was just here, I think, we saw the Thing the first time, and it headed off down towards the foot-

ball stand, this way," and he turned his steps down the river. Looking, he saw both the boys standing a little way back. "Aren't you coming?" he said.

"Oh, what's the use chasing the old thing? We can do it in the morning as well," said the Wee One. "It's too late to-night. Come on up to the room. It was probably only a shadow, anyway."

"No, I'm going ahead, and if you fellows want to go back, you may go back. I'm going to take a look down by that football stand," and he turned his face in that direction and stepped out briskly. "They would think we were great ninnies if we went back without doing what we started to do."

"Hold on, Frank, I'll come," said Jimmy. "I don't want you trapesing around alone down here."

"Well, I suppose I might as well go along, too," said the Wee One, who preferred the company of the others, even on a ghost hunt, to traversing the field all alone. So he, too, swung in behind Jimmy, and the three went Indian file down along the river path. They stepped carefully and looked on each side of them. A couple of hundred yards further along loomed the dark shadow of the football stand.

"That's where I think it went, down behind the stand. There's quite a high bank there, and some bushes grow at the edge of the river," said Frank, holding on his course. The others came reluctantly along, not at all pleased with the adventure. The football stand was just ahead, and the shadow it cast was as black as velvet. The space between the stand and the river looked like a pocket, so dark was it, and the river itself murmured along, singing a mournful tune at their left.

"S-s-s—! what was that?" said Jimmy. "I thought I heard a noise ahead." The three boys came together, and grabbed each other. They listened with all their ears.

"There's certainly something there," whispered Frank, "and it's moving about, don't you hear it? Come on, we'll see what it is;" but before he could take a step ahead both Jimmy and the Wee One grabbed him by the arms. But he shook himself clear of them, and went stealthily ahead, walking on tip-toe. There was nothing else left for Frank's companions but to follow. They felt their hair rising, and at every step they took they glanced uneasily to right and left, as though in deadly fear that something would spring from

the bushes, and grab them with wet and clammy hands.

Again there was a sound as of something moving in the darkness just ahead, and the boys drew close together again and waited. They themselves were in the shadow of the stand by this time, and the noise came from a point apparently only a few yards ahead. Suddenly the moon, which had been behind a cloud, shone out faintly and the boys could see something moving back and forth about half-way down the stand.

"Come on," said Frank, "we'll rush it."

"We will not do anything of the kind," said the Wee One. "You can't tell what it might be."

"Well, I'll go alone, then," said Frank, in a whisper, "I'm going to find out what that is."

"I'll go with you," said Jimmy, quietly. He was not going to let his old chum take desperate chances alone.

The boys, however, were saved the necessity of "rushing it," for the noise began to grow louder, and resolved itself into a definite step which came in their direction. They squeezed themselves back against the big uprights of the stand and waited, hardly knowing what to expect. In another moment the footsteps had come oppo-

site to their hiding-place, and Frank closely followed by Jimmy, sprang out into the path and grappled with something. Down they went on the ground, a general mix-up from which proceeded groans and grunts. Finally Frank's voice rose clear:

"I've got it, strike a match."

The Wee One struck a match with shaking fingers, and when it blazed up it showed the scared face of no other a person than Gleason—the old Codfish!

"Holy Moses in the bulrushes!" said that individual, "what do you mean by jumping on a fellow that way, knocking him down and nearly choking the daylights out of him?" gasped the Codfish, as soon as he had gulped down enough breath to fill his lungs.

"Well, I'll be hanged," said Frank, ruefully, "I thought you were the ghost. Pardon me, old man."

"Well, at first I thought you were the same thing, but when we'd been scrapping around here on the ground for about a minute I thought you were the devil for sure and all. My, you little rooster, I didn't know you had so much strength. You nearly choked the life out of me."

"What are you doing down here, anyway?" said Frank, suspiciously. "I thought you were going over to the library."

"Well, I did go over to the library, but I've heard a lot about there being a ghost down here, and I came down to investigate it myself."

"And we were down on the same errand. It's a good joke," and the boys had a good laugh there together in the shade of the stand.

Together they retraced their steps to Warren Hall, where they found David and Lewis holding the fort at the window. Both were considerably alarmed, for they had not expected the friends to be out so late. The chapel bell had just tolled the third quarter after nine o'clock. Lewis had been suggesting the organization of a searching party, believing that the apparition had turned on the investigators and thrown them into the river.

The whole story was gone over for the amusement of Lewis and David, and they entered into the general fun. Then they agreed that nothing should be said of the adventure outside, because it was too good a joke; but somehow it leaked out, and was all around the school before noon of the next day.

The matter even spread to the Milton papers, and that afternoon there was a half-column article in the Milton *Record,* telling of the encounter on Queen's field between Frank Armstrong and the ghost which had been haunting the place for some time. Frank was given great credit for having the bravery to follow the thing, whatever it might be.

Of course, that was enough to set the whole school by the ears, and every night there were watching parties, but the ghost did not make its appearance again, at least while the watchers were around. And gradually the excitement about it died away. The officers of the school did not take much stock in the stories, believing, they said, that it was probably the beam from some searchlight which reflected from some window on the yard, and played fantastic tricks on the eyes of the beholders. Frank and Jimmy and the ones who had seen it the most frequently knew it was not a mere shadow, but there was nothing to do about it but to wait.

"I'm going to get it yet," Frank said to David. "Ghost or no ghost, I'm going to chase it down."

"It may never appear again," said David.

"I think it will. We haven't seen the last of it."

Gleason, who was at his desk, was listening to the conversation. "What do you think about it, Gleason?" asked Frank.

"Oh, I'm not much of a judge of such things, but I suppose it will show its nose some time again and scare us all out of our boots when we least expect it. I wouldn't wonder if we had an appearance soon, it's about time."

"What makes you think so?"

"Oh, I don't know, I just feel that way."

"Well," returned Frank, "I'm too busy with my work just now to chase it, but it better look out."

"Better let it alone, it may hurt you."

"What makes you think so? I thought you said you were no judge of ghosts a minute ago!"

"Well, all I know is that I'm not going hunting it again. Once was enough."

Nothing more was said that night, but the next night, shortly after the early dusk had fallen, Gleason, who had been bending over his studies at the table, got up, stretched himself, and said:

"Well, I guess I'll go over to the library a little

while. I'll be back in an hour or so." He went out and shut the door behind him.

He was no sooner out of sight than Frank slammed his book down on the desk, startling David.

"I have a notion there's going to be an appearance to-night. Something in my bones tells me there is something on foot, and the ghost is going to walk, or glide, or fly, or something. And, by the hocus pocus, I'm going to find out which means of locomotion it uses, and whether it is vapor or blood and bones."

"How, I'd like to know?" inquired David.

"See this perfectly fine piece of cord? Well, it's about a hundred feet long, a nice hempen cord, big enough for ghost or man to hang himself on. Now, I'm going to tie one end of this to that big oak tree down on the bank, and the other end to a stake at the corner of the gymnasium. Whatever the blooming thing is, it will have to go past that string. It seems to float right through the air, and if it really does that then I'll have to guess again. But I have a notion it doesn't float, and if it walks, there's going to be a tumble for it, for this nice little piece of cord will be four or five feet off the ground.

"You shoot up and get Jimmy and Lewis," Frank continued, "and I'll shoot down and hitch up my trap. Have them come to the bank right under our window, and we'll wait there and see what happens." Frank was off with a rush to do his part of the work, and David started on his errand. In ten or fifteen minutes Frank had accomplished his purpose, and was back, waiting at the bank behind Warren Hall, alongside the trunk of a big oak, protected from the cold of the late November night by a thick sweater and heavy cap. He was joined there a few minutes later by the three boys and the Wee One; for on the way over they had run across the latter and brought him along.

When the new arrivals came to the meeting-place, the Wee One wanted to know what it was all about. Frank gave a whispered account of what he had done.

"Yes, but what gives you the notion that the great scene from Macbeth is coming off to-night?"

"Never mind, I just feel that it is, and I wanted you fellows to see it. All we have to do is to watch here and keep out of sight."

"If you expect us to watch here long with

you," said the Wee One, "you should have provided a gas stove or something. It's blithering cold." The boys huddled up close together, and waited while the minutes passed without anything happening.

"My opinion of it is, that you're a bum guesser. Get us out of our cosey corners just to see how wrong you could be," grumbled the Wee One.

"Keep your nerve, Big Fellow," retorted Frank. " 'Everything comes to him who waits,' so the copybook of my fast vanishing childhood told me. The night is only begun. I say, Lewis, will you run over and look in the library and see if the Codfish is there?"

"Run over yourself," suggested Lewis.

" 'Fraid cat. I can't go," said Frank. "I'm stage manager of this act, and I can't leave the job."

"I'll go," said the Wee One. "It will keep me from freezing," and he dashed off. He was back in a few minutes, and reported that Gleason had been there, but had gone a few minutes before. One of the fellows who knew Gleason was positive that he had gone out, probably to his room.

"Why did you want to know?" added the messenger.

"Well, I didn't want him messing around here. He'd think we were crazy, sitting out here on the cold ground, waiting for a spirit to make its appearance."

"Well, if it doesn't indicate its presence in about three shakes of a lamb's tail, I, for one, will be after wishing you a hearty good ni——"

He paused in the middle of his sentence and pointed. There over the clump of trees near the boat-house rose the Thing. It seemed to come right out of the trees, and headed across the field in the direction of Warren, just as it had done before. The boys watched it with bated breath, as it approached them. Lewis, who had been a little way down the bank, now hastily got to his feet and went to the rear of the group, ready to make a flying retreat if necessary, but meanwhile keeping the others in front of him as a measure of present safety. On the Thing came till it was within a hundred yards or so of where they were hidden, then it stopped and appeared to go backwards in the direction of the football stand and the river.

No one moved. They sat watching, expecting

every moment that it would disappear as it had in the past. And it did disappear, but not just in that way. All of a sudden the sound of a yell floated up to the ears of the watchers. The white thing took a curious circular motion in the moonlight and sank to the ground; but it did not disappear, instead it seemed to flop around and then lay quiet.

"Come on, fellows," yelled Frank. "David, you stay here," and he started to run in the direction of the ghost as fast as his legs would carry him. Jimmy and the Wee One followed him. In a minute or two they were up to the ghost. There seemed to be two of it, one white and the other black. The white thing lay in a heap on the grass and the black thing rolled around in agony.

"O Lord, I'm killed, I'm killed. My arms and my legs are all broken."

"Great Scott! it's the Codfish!" cried Jimmy. "Here, help him. He's hurt."

The three boys got on their knees beside the repentant ghost.

"I was just doing it for fun," he said. "I learned to walk on stilts this summer. Oh, my arms! and I thought it would be a good joke to start a scare in the school—so I got a sheet—and

wrapped it around me down there in the woods —and then walked around here and—down behind the football stand, where I hid the stilts— Oh, I know I'm going to die!" This confession came out in gasps, for the fall over Frank's cord, hampered as the "ghost" had been by the entangling sheet, had been a severe one. But, fortunately, it had broken no bones, and the worst damage it had done the Codfish was to knock all the wind out of his body.

He was a very humble ghost as the investigators helped him up to his room that night.

"But for heaven's sake don't tell any one about it. I'd never hear the last of it," he begged. But like the other joke on the Codfish, the story somehow got out and the "ghost" was guyed about his tumble for the rest of his school course.

And the next day the Milton *Record* had another story of how Frank Armstrong trapped the mystery of Queen's School. It was the sensation of the year.

CHAPTER XX.

A CONTEST AT THE GYMNASIUM.

With the laying of the ghost, excitement dropped temporarily from the life of Queen's School. It was the time for work now, and right valiantly did every one study, making up for some of the lost time in the glorious fall days which invited one out in the open to waste the hours. Examinations were coming along, and the evenings were put in poring over the books.

Mrs. Armstrong was a visitor at the school for a day at this time, and Frank conducted her around the grounds, to the boat-house, the foot-ball field, the baseball field and the gymnasium. She wanted to know where they had trapped the ghost, and he showed her. It was a happy day for Frank, who pointed out the various things of interest around the old school as if they belonged to him personally.

Mrs. Armstrong noted the look of health on

her boy's face, and was glad. She felt that he had already gained something physically, for even in the short time he had been at the school he seemed to have increased in stature. She told Frank that he was growing like a weed.

"You think I'm growing. Just cast your eye on Jimmy," said Frank. "Jimmy grew bigger every day of football and he is as hard as a stone wall. Feel his muscles. Come on, Jimmy, show the lady." And Jimmy obligingly flexed his biceps and offered the bunched-up knot of muscles as a proof of his growing power.

"And look at David there. He's going to be the champion strong man of Queen's, if he doesn't look out. He spends all his spare time down at the gym. You should see him dipping on the parallel bars and doing stunts on the flying rings. Patsy has to actually drive him out of the place," which was a fact. "David has made up his mind to be a 'champeen.' "

"I can't do anything else, Mrs. Armstrong," said David. "And I've got so much to learn that I have to keep at it."

David had set his heart on winning a place on the gymnasium team, and to do this he had taken up the work he was best fitted for. Owing

to his light body and a natural strength in his arms, he was already able to do things in raising himself with his arms, which a boy fully developed, of greater general strength, might have accomplished only with the greatest difficulty.

David's strength of arm was in evidence one day at the gymnasium when the four friends, David, Frank, Jimmy and Lewis, were on the floor. A certain amount of physical work in the gym was called for by the school requirements, or, at least, a certain time had to be spent in some kind of exercise. Boys who took part in any of the outdoor sports were not called upon to do work on the floor during the period of practice of the teams they represented. To Lewis, who was indolent of body, the hour in the gym was the hardest of the day, but he made his task as light as it could be. His way of exercise was to stroll over to a chest-weight and give it two or three pulls with the lightest loads he could find for it, and then walk to the other end of the gym for two or three pulls at some other piece of apparatus. Patsy kept after him, but athletic work for Lewis was like pulling teeth.

On the day in question, the four boys had just

about finished their work and stopped by the end of the parallel bars.

"How many times can you dip?" said Jimmy. Dipping, as of course every one knows, consists in raising oneself up and down from a bent position of the arms to a straight position, the weight of the body being carried entirely on the arms during the raise and drop.

"I don't know," said Frank, "never tried."

"Go on and show your speed," said Jimmy, "it will be good practice for your pitching arm. All good pitchers have lots of muscle, you know."

"Yes, go ahead," said David, "we'll all try."

Frank, thus urged, swung up on the end of the bars. "Count for me," he said, as he let himself down between the bars and straightened up; "I'll need all the wind I've got."

Jimmy began, "One, two, three, four, five, six, good boy, keep a-going—seven, eight,—getting pretty heavy, eh? Nine, ten—eleven, twelve—going, going, gone;—no, he has one more in him, —thirteen—don't stop there, it's unlucky." But Frank had stuck. He got down all right on the fourteenth dip, but could not straighten up. He dropped off, puffing. "Gee, that's work," he said. "Go ahead, you try," indicating Jimmy.

"No," said that individual, "I want to see Lewis try it."

"Oh, I'm not feeling very strong to-day," said Lewis, "I'll do it some other day."

"Here, here, no shystering," said all hands. "We all agreed to do it. Take your turn."

So Lewis reluctantly struggled to a position on the bars. "I'll count," said Frank. Lewis let himself down gingerly, and there he hung. He was heavy and fat. He made desperate efforts to push himself up again, and struggled and kicked, but although he got part of the way up, he couldn't straighten those arms, although the blood was almost bursting out of his cheeks in the effort. The boys were howling with laughter.

"Kick with your left leg."

"Hold your mouth straight, and you'll make it."

"Get a step ladder."

"Give him a push."

"Get an elevator."

These and other suggestions the tormentors offered Lewis as he hung there struggling. Finally, in despair, he let go and dropped to the floor.

The boys were screaming with laughter, and Lewis was not any too well pleased.

"Good work, Lewis, you did it just half a time. That's a record."

"Try it yourself," said Lewis, "I told you I didn't feel very strong this afternoon. I've got a lame wrist, anyway." Lewis always had an excuse.

It was Jimmy's turn and he mounted the bars. Frank counted, and Jimmy, who was remarkably strong for his years, being a sound and sturdy youngster, dipped down and swung back again no less than nineteen times before he gave it up.

"Whew!" said Frank, "that beats me. I guess you're it."

"No," said Jimmy. "David hasn't tried yet."

"I guess I can't dip that many times," said David, preparing for his trial. "Patsy says it's one of the hardest things to do and shows actual strength. I can't measure up with much success against Jimmy."

But nevertheless he climbed to the position on the bar. "Count for me," he said to Frank, and Frank began, while David swung up and down with the regularity of a pendulum. He passed Jimmy's figures without a bit of effort apparently, reached twenty, and then the boys began to open their eyes. He did not stop at

twenty, but kept it up without fatigue until he reached the great number of forty-two times. Then he stopped, but looked as though he might have continued for five minutes longer.

"Hats off to David Powers," said Frank, which, seeing that they had no hats on, was not a thing difficult of accomplishment. "Isn't he the dandy little dipper?"

"He certainly is," agreed Jimmy. "How on earth do you do it?"

"Oh, I'm built for it," said David, looking down at his twisted legs. "Patsy says all my strength has gone to my arms and shoulders. He says the record for the dip is 66, made five or six years ago by one of the football fellows."

"I'll bet you beat it before you get through," said Frank, admiringly.

"I'd like to."

"Then the record you made would go down over on the wall there to stay until some other fellow did better."

"I don't think I can ever do it, but as it is one of the few things I can do, I'll keep busy at it," said David.

Patsy strolled up at this moment, and they told him what they had been at.

"You can never beat David Powers at dipping or pulling up on the horizontal bar. Did you ever see him climbing the rope? He's been down here in the mornings, learning how to do that."

"O-ho, Mr. Powers," said Frank, "is that where you sneak off to in the mornings, down to the gym, eh? Well, you are out after the records, aren't you?" But there was a note of pride in Frank's tone as he looked at the little chap.

"Come on, David, show them how a cat goes up a rope," said Patsy. He loosened the climbing rope from the side of the gallery, and let it swing to its position with a clear space of twenty-five feet to the rafters, where it was attached by an eye-bolt. David moved over to the rope by the aid of his cane, with which he could get around in the gymnasium, seized the rope and went up it hand over hand, like a sailor. It seemed hardly more than a half dozen breaths before he had reached the very top of the rope, touched the rafter, slid down the rope, and was with them again on the floor.

"There's only two fellows in this whole school who can beat that, and even now I think he'd give them a good tussle if it came to a contest.

Before the winter is over we'll have the gym trials, and then you'll see some good contests. I'm backing this young fellow Freshman to win some points if he keeps up his improvement," said Patsy, laying his hand on David's shoulder. David smiled in a pleased manner and looked down.

"Well, I'll take good care I don't get into any rope-climbing contests with him; I'd come out at the little end of the horn," said Frank.

"And I'll dodge them, too," remarked Jimmy.

"And I'm thinking of entering the dip contests and the rope-climbing myself," said Lewis, which raised a laugh.

"Lewis, you could climb a rope if it was stretched along the ground, all right," said Jimmy, "or if you had a convenient elevator."

"You are all very discouraging to a really good athlete. Some day I'll show you fellows," said the disgruntled Lewis.

It was a few days after the incident in the gymnasium that the scouts of the Gamma Tau looked in on Jimmy and Frank again, but they were met with the same answer. "This is the last time," Cuthbert said to Frank. "We've got about all the men we want now. We'd like to

have you both come in. And don't forget that you can't get very far in this school without the help of Gamma Tau."

To this very direct threat both boys who were sought, answered firmly that if they couldn't get along without Gamma Tau they would have to do without the delightful backing of that autocrat society. Frank was so outspoken that he raised Cuthbert's ire before the call was over; and the caller intimated that if Frank had any ambitions in the direction of the baseball nine in the spring he might as well bury them, for he couldn't get on it.

"Why, Simpson, the captain, is one of our biggest men, and I think you're a fool not to play for his friendship."

But the argument had no strength with Frank, who saw more and more the bad effect of the fraternity in the school life. It made a clique of fellows who considered themselves a little better than the boys who were not in its membership.

"You fellows are going to have a tumble some of these days. You can't run things here all the time."

"Well, I guess we can run them as far as you're

concerned, Mr. Frank Armstrong. You can set that down in your diary and refer to it next spring about baseball time. Good night. Remember, it's the last call for dinner."

"All right, Mr. Cuthbert. I know it is considered an honor to be given the chance to come in, but I'm going to stay outside, for I think I can do better without Gamma Tau. And if I can't, well, then I'll have to do worse. If you fellows don't look out, some one will start another society."

"It's been tried," said Cuthbert, now at the door with his hand on the knob. "It's been tried two or three times, but it never comes to anything. All I can say is, that you are letting a good chance go. But fools will be fools. Good night."

CHAPTER XXI.

THE LOSS OF A RINK.

It was a very open fall that first year of Frank's at Queen's School, and despite the fact that the boys who were inclined to the game of hockey prayed fervently for good ice, Jack Frost held off. Several times it threatened to freeze up, and there was a great polishing and sharpening of skates and seeing to the leather straps.

"When the ice comes we'll get up a hockey team," said Frank to Jimmy one day, meeting him in the yard. "Neither of us will get a chance at the school team, so we might as well have some fun ourselves."

"And who will we play with, I'd like to know, supposing the ice did come, and supposing we could get up a team?"

"I'll bet you the best hockey stick in Milton that there'll be lots of chances. There'll be so many scrub sevens out that there won't be enough ice. Are you game for it?"

"Sure thing," said Jimmy. "We can rope Lewis in. There's a fellow in my entry named Hazard who drops in evenings to borrow a book. He says he can skate. Lewis isn't a half bad skater, and he's so fat that he would naturally get in the way of the puck without being very quick. So he would be a good goal tender."

"Good enough," returned Frank. "That makes four, and we can pick three other fellows up somewhere. Be on the look out and I'll keep my eye out, too. Meantime, pray for the ice."

But all things, as the copybooks say, come to him who waits. About the middle of December sharper weather came on, and then one afternoon the mercury began to slide down the tube of the thermometer. At six o'clock in the evening it stood at zero, and the boys covered the distance from their rooms to the dining-hall supper table and back in record time, owing to the biting air.

Frank was over to see Jimmy that night and reported that the big thermometer that his father had given him, and which hung outside his window, registered seven below.

"And it's going down further, and what's

equally good, there hasn't been a bit of wind since the cold snap came."

"And what has wind to do with it?" inquired Lewis.

"Hasn't anything to do with the freezing, but with wind the ice is rough. I met Potter coming up from the ice just before dark and he says it's like glass, and is so thick now he could hardly punch his heel through it."

"Sounds good," said Jimmy. "We will then, to-night, organize the great Armstrong hockey club."

"No, don't call it after me. I may not be good enough to stick on. But we've got to have a name. Suggest something, Lewis."

"Well," said the goal-tender-to-be, "I guess we might as well call it the Lollipops. Sweet things on the end of a stick, you know."

"Hurray for the goal-tender. Lollipops it will be! The Lollipop Hockey Club of Queen's School. First practice to-morrow afternoon at three thirty. How does that hit you?" said Frank.

"All right for me," said Jimmy.

"And me, too," piped up Lewis. "I'll show

you the way to stop 'em. If you can get them past your Uncle Dudley, you will be going some."

"All right, Fatty," said Jimmy. "If you play half as well as you talk we will have the real thing in a hockey team."

Frank's prediction came true about the freeze, and what it would do. Before the thermometer got through on its shivering downward course it touched ten below, some time during the night, and then travelled upward again; but by the middle of the next forenoon it was back to ten degrees above. It was still pretty nippy, but just the right brace was in the air for violent exercise. The boys could hardly wait for the middle of the afternoon to come around. Some of them had already been on the glittering surface of the river, and reported it like glass, and four inches thick.

Frank had selected a place about a hundred yards up the river for the site of his rink. It was a spot in a small cove, pretty well sheltered by trees and protected from the sharp winds which blew across the more exposed parts of the river. For the first day the Lollipops and a dozen others of the class, any one in fact who came along, contented themselves with tearing

up and down the ice and shooting a puck between piles of coats which did duty for a cage. Wearying of this unorganized exercise after a while, Jimmy, Lewis and Frank picked up their coats and started up the river in the direction of Warwick, five miles away.

They swung along easily, enjoying the freshness and crispness of the air, and the really wonderful ice under foot. Half-way up to the rival school they met several of the skaters from that school, among them big Channing of the football team, who nodded pleasantly to Jimmy and came to a halt.

"Are you going to have a hockey team down there this year?" Channing asked, nodding his head in the direction of Queen's. "If you are, we want to get a game or two."

"Yes, there will be a school team I guess, particularly if the ice holds out, but we are only Freshmen and will probably not get a chance at it," said Jimmy. "They had a team last year, didn't they?"

"Yes, but we beat it 15 to 4, and we want to get a chance to do it again. It might help Queen's to put a few lively young Freshmen on it. I'd advise you to try."

"We have, or are going to have a team of our own, and we will masquerade under the splendid name of the Lollipops. We'll give you a game when we learn how to stand on our skates," said Frank, laughingly.

"All right, Lollipops, that's a go, in case Dixon can't get a classy seven together."

"Chip Dixon, is he the captain?" said Frank, quickly.

"Yes, I think I heard he was elected. He's about the roughest player Queen's has had on the team, but when he roughed it we roughed it, and the result was while he was doing nothing else but roughing it, we were playing a little hockey. Dixon was one of the best players on Queen's, but lost his temper and hit one of our forwards a deliberate blow over the arm with his stick. It came to be pretty nearly a general row all around. Our fellows are just aching to get at Queen's again."

"Well, you'd better send a challenge down. I'm not on good terms with Mr. Dixon," said Frank. "Perhaps he will take you on. But if he doesn't, we'll put you on our schedule when we learn to toddle around and hang onto a stick."

The group parted company. When the trio

returned to the float, scores of fellows were darting around here and there on their skates, and a large bonfire had been built on the bank, which threw a cheerful light over the sparkling ice and helped to dispel the darkness which had already begun to fall.

Before night came on, however, our founders of the Lollipop Club had laid out their rink in the little cove. They set down four blocks of wood about five inches in diameter, two at each end of the "grounds," chipping out little pockets in the ice, into which the blocks were set. Then they filled these pockets with water.

"Those posts will be as steady as the gate posts of Queen's School by to-morrow morning," observed Frank, "if nobody bothers them. It will certainly make a dandy place to play," he added, looking around. "It's just off the line of travel, enough so it won't interfere with general skating, and our posts will be in no one's way."

Every one was well tired that night. The unusual exercise of skating and the violent way most of them had gone into it left them with aching bones and muscles. After supper Frank and Jimmy went around, and completed the Lolli-

pop seven from the ranks of Freshmen they knew.

"When we get started, I'll bet we have dozens more than we want. And when they see Lewis on the job they'll pay us money to let them in with us."

The weather held sharp and clear, and the following morning two inches more had been added to the river's coating. It was now safe beyond any doubt. Frank, during the forenoon, was down to the river to see how the marks they had set were standing. He reported that they were as stiff as rocks. They were like posts which had been let down through the ice and anchored in the mud of the river.

That afternoon the Lollipops made their descent on Wampaug river in full force. Jimmy had succeeded in finding a couple of other Freshmen for substitutes to complete the quota of players. When the news of the formation of a Freshman team was noised around, it was evident that there would be no trouble in finding plenty of opponents, for every one on the river had a stick, and the novelty of gliding up and down merely for skating's sake had passed. Frank

was besieged by applicants. So they rushed down across the field, got into their skates at the boat-house float, and struck up the river to a chatter of excitement at the beginning the club was to have.

"Well, what do you think of that for a nerve?" cried Frank, as coming around a curve from the float which had hidden the "grounds" that they had laid out the night before, they saw that the place was already occupied. "And, by George, it's Chip Dixon. I'll be jiggered if it isn't."

The Lollipops skated up slowly, but their arrival seemed to have no effect on the boys who were occupying their rink. Frank recognized, besides Chip, several of the Gamma Tau men, among them Cuthbert of the nine, who had been after candidates for the society not so long before, Boston Wheeler, the fullback of the eleven, and several others. They paid not the slightest attention to the real proprietors of the territory, but kept on gaily with their play.

A slashing drive sent the puck to the river bank, and while some one was recovering it Frank sculled slowly over to Chip and said, "I

think you have our 'grounds,' haven't you? We laid these out last night, and planted the markers."

"Oh, is that so?" said Chip, indifferently. "Very nice of you. We like the place very much, indeed."

"But it is ours, and we want to play. It isn't the regular practice place of the school team, is it?"

"Our regular practice place is wherever we want to play, so run along, Freshie, and don't bother us. All right, I've got you"—this to a mate who sent the puck spinning across the ice in Chip's direction. Thereafter Chip was busily engaged, and paid no attention whatever to the Lollipops, who stood around glumly, hardly daring to break out into open revolt.

"Dixon has done this for spite and nothing else," said Jimmy. "The Wee One told me that the school team generally practises just below the boat-house float. I'd like to knock his head off," and Jimmy grabbed his stick and swung it around him vigorously. "I'll get even with him for this, see if I don't."

"He's got it in for both of us," said Frank, who

had now turned his back on the players. "We can't make a fuss, although we do know he has chucked us out of our own place. Come on, let's go up the river and find another place where——"

Frank had not done speaking when a terrific collision sent him sprawling on his face, and as he got to his feet again a sarcastic voice said: "Can't you keep out of the way? Can't you give us room to play our game?"

It was Chip, who had deliberately run into Frank when the latter was unprepared and given him a nasty fall. Blood was trickling from a cut over Frank's eye where he had struck the ice. The sight of the blood made Jimmy wild with anger. He helped Frank to get his balance and then turned on Chip, who had started to skate away.

"That was a contemptible trick, Dixon," he said, "and for two pins I'd punch your head for you, although you are the captain."

Chip heard and wheeled like a flash. He drove straight at Jimmy, and swung his stick at the latter's head. Jimmy saw him coming in time, sidestepped the rush, stuck out his foot, and Dixon went head over heels sprawling on the ice. Jimmy followed him, just as eager as Chip was

to settle the matter there and then with blows, but Chip had received a tumble which took a good deal of the fight out of him, and by the time he had regained his feet a crowd of boys were in between the two.

"You'll pay for this, you red-headed little chump," said Chip, savagely, rubbing his bumped skull. "I'll pound you within an inch of your life if I ever catch you where your friends can't interfere."

"It's your friends who are interfering," said Jimmy, coolly, holding his ground. "I'll settle it right now if you wish, you cowardly bully." And Jimmy threw his stick on the ice, his eyes blazing.

Frank, who had recovered from his cruel fall, skated over to Jimmy and slipped his arm around him, saying: "Don't mind about it, Jimmy. He isn't worth while. Let's go up the river and pick out another place, and have our little fun, for there isn't much daylight left. Come on, Lollipops." Jimmy picked up his stick slowly, keeping a savage eye on Dixon, and somewhat reluctantly followed Frank and the others a hundred yards or so up-stream. The encounter had been watched by a score or more of boys, none of

whom cared much about Chip's way of doing things. But they were much attracted to the young Freshman who had dared the mighty Dixon in his own lair. So they followed Frank and Jimmy to the new place, where coat-markers were laid down. In the vigorous play that followed, the clash of the afternoon was soon forgotten.

"I was a fool to get mad," said Jimmy as they trudged homeward over the frozen ground, "but he set me boiling, and I lost my red head entirely."

"I'm afraid he'll try to get you some time and may do you some harm."

"Not he. I can take care of myself, and don't you worry about that, Frank. I believe he has a yellow streak in him. I'm ready for him any time."

And at about the same time Chip Dixon was travelling back to the yard in a group of his cronies. "I'll get that red-headed guy some day and knock that carroty nut clean off his shoulders," said Chip. But at the moment he said it, he wondered a little if it might not be a pretty hard job.

CHAPTER XXII.

A HEROIC RESCUE.

The encounter between Chip and Jimmy on the ice that afternoon was the talk of the whole school at the supper table, and when the two boys concerned passed near each other on the way out the onlookers stepped aside fearful that something might take place there and then, but nothing happened.

In general the school sympathized with the Freshman, but Dixon wielded so much influence in the school and bullied it so unmercifully that there was not much public expression of opinion. A good many thought that if it came to a matter of collision between them with a fair field that Jimmy would be Dixon's match, for they had seen the former play football, and although he was not as big as Dixon they knew how sturdy he was, and how determined he would probably be in a fight.

Jimmy, although he knew in his heart that the matter would have to be settled between them before his school life was over, was very docile, and when Frank said that evening: "Jimmy, I don't want you to get into any scraps about me. I'd much rather take another cut eye from Chip, although I don't relish it a bit, than to have you get into trouble or get scrapping with anyone on my account. I wanted to go for Dixon myself this afternoon, but you know what the school rules are about it—suspension or possible dismissal."

"All right, boss," said Jimmy. "I'll behave, but the big chump made me mad, first taking our rink and second smashing into you when your back was turned. You'll have to admit that he got what he deserved. I noticed that his eye was good and black where he came in contact with the ice when I tripped him that time he rushed me."

"Just like mine," said Frank, laughing. Frank's eye, too, had a fine, dark tint underneath, and with a piece of sticking plaster over his eyebrow, he looked anything but attractive.

"Anyone to see you, Frank, would think you had been playing football," observed David, "but it might have been worse."

"Yes," returned Frank, "it might have been both eyes."

"It's a better combination," laughed David, "to have one blue one and one black one; kind of gives variety to your features."

There was a knock at the door, and the Wee One strolled into the room.

"Hello, pugilists," he said to Frank and Jimmy. "Understand you are both matched for the heavyweight class. Can't I come in on the scrapping somewhere?"

"You aren't even in the featherweight class," said Gleason.

"What would you call me then?"

"O, I think about the postage-stamp class."

"Well," retorted the Wee One, "I'd be a good postage stamp, for I don't remember that I've been licked yet."

"Old, very old," said Gleason. "I think I have the record of that here," and he pretended to search through his notebook. "Yes, here it is—'postage-stamp joke, first to be taken in out of the wet by Noah's secretary, who had the job of collecting all the old jokes. Said to have first been uttered by Adam.'"

"Well, it's a good easy joke to understand; it

isn't like the ones you get off, Gleason. Yours need a chart with them," retorted the Wee One.

"We're going to have some big doings at the rink to-morrow afternoon, will you come down and referee, Patty?" said Frank.

"Sure I'll come, and I'm the dandy little referee. Refereed for years at the St. Nicholas Rink. Yale, Princeton and Harvard cried for me, and once I was in the hospital, and they wouldn't play the game."

"It's a fine thing to have a reputation," said Jimmy.

"Much better to have an imagination like the Wee One's, though," said David.

"What are the doings?" inquired the referee. "Are you going to take on Chip's bunch?"

"Not on the picture of the Sacred Cow. We are going to play with gentlemen—that is, we are going to have a game with ourselves. Since there will be no more scrapping you will be safe. We will promise not to speak even an unkind word to you," said Frank.

"And I'll be down to keep the record of all the perfectly lovely tallies," said Gleason.

"You will not need to bring a large book. Lewis is goal-tender, and he's so fat that the only

way to score is to throw the punk right through him, and he's so thick that that is about impossible."

After more chaff and banter the Wee One got up.

"I must be going," he said. "I'm tired as a whole family of dogs, and I'm going to sleep without bothering my head about that algebra which comes to-morrow morning. If you hear any loud sounds pretty soon you'll not be alarmed, but know that it's your happy referee preparing for to-morrow's fracas. My room-mate's home for a few days, so I'll have the place all to myself. Good night."

"Good night," echoed the boys. Jimmy took his departure a few minutes later, and Frank, being tired from the exercise of the afternoon, turned in. David followed as he always followed Frank in everything. Gleason sat pegging away at some obstreperous lesson, and then he, too, with a prodigious yawn, slammed his book shut, and went to his own chamber. Darkness settled upon the old dormitory, and the boys slept.

Frank was dreaming that he was in the middle of a most exciting hockey game. The puck was flying hither and thither, and the spectators were

yelling like mad. Suddenly he woke to the realization that there was a yelling, but that it came from the outside, and not from the dream spectators. He sat up in bed and listened. There was a clattering in the entry, a confused sound of voices outside, and then the chapel bell began to ring wildly. What did it all mean? David was also awake now and staring. Suddenly through all the noise outside rose the clear cry:

"Fire! fire! fire!" The terrible cry in the middle of the night brought Frank out of bed standing. He pulled David to his feet, helped him on with a few scanty clothes, and was picking up more clothes, when one of the teachers burst into the room.

"Warren is on fire," he yelled; "hurry up. Fire in the next entry."

Frank and David lost no time in getting down to the ground where they found half of the school already assembled, watching the smoke rolling from the entry windows. No one knew how the fire had started, but the night watchman of the school on making his rounds had smelled smoke, and on investigation located it in the first entry. Quick action by the watchman had raised the alarm, and the boys all over the dormitory were

flying from their beds as Frank and David and Gleason had flown. They gathered outside to watch the progress of the flames.

There was a hasty count of noses by Mr. Parks. "Thank heaven, they are all out!" he exclaimed. And it was well, for the smoke was now beginning to roll threateningly from the upper windows of the entry, and now and then a little glint of flames showed where the fire was gaining headway. Across the yard came rattling the volunteer fire apparatus manned by some of the bigger boys and the teachers. Queen's had always boasted a fire department, but there never had been a real test of it, and now that the test had come they seemed terribly slow in getting the hose attached to the hydrant which was fed from the reservoir upon the hill.

All of a sudden, Frank began to look for the Wee One. A terrible thought came to him that he might still be in his room. "Where is Patterson?" he cried frantically, hoping to hear an answer from the Wee One from some safe position on the ground, but there was no answer. It was with a white face that he turned to Mr. Parks, and said: "Patterson must be in his room; he's not down here."

"He couldn't sleep through all this noise, surely not," said Mr. Parks.

"He was in my room last night, and said he was very tired and would sleep sound. O, he must be there and we must save him." He rushed to the doorway up which some of the volunteers were trying to carry the hose, but he was forced back by a dense cloud of black smoke which whirled down the stairway. The stairway was evidently on fire somewhere up above.

"Come round to the end of Warren," yelled Frank. "One of Patterson's bedroom windows is on the end of the building." A score of boys, hearing his words, tore around to the end of the building, but the Wee One's room was dark.

Frank turned his gaze on the ground, and good fortune favored him when he saw a lump of frozen turf which lay by the edge of the walk. He picked it up, and with a throw as accurate as if he were sending a ball over the plate, he sent the lump of earth smashing through Patterson's bedroom window. The signal was effective. In a moment a white-clad figure appeared at the window.

"What's the matter?" it yelled. "What are you throwing rocks through my window for?" The tone was highly indignant.

"The dormitory is afire," yelled the voices below. The white-robed figure left the bedroom window only to return in a moment.

"The study is full of smoke," shouted the Wee One from his lofty position. "Someone get a ladder. I'll have to come down this way." He was hanging over the window sill, and leaning far out so he could make his voice heard. "It's getting mighty hot here; the fire seems to be in the entry outside my door, but I've got my door between the bedroom here and the study shut. Won't some one hurry with a ladder?"

"Hurray, here comes the ladder," the crowd shouted as two fellows came running with the ladder on their shoulders. All hands gave assistance to planting the ladder firmly, and swung it end up toward the window. The Wee One had slipped up the lower sash, and was climbing out on the narrow ledge, making ready to escape.

"It is too short," cried the crowd below in horror. It was true! The top of the ladder did not reach the ledge, where the Wee One main-

tained with difficulty his slender footing, by at least five feet.

"Lift it up," cried some one, and a dozen eager hands seized the ladder and pushed its end closer to Patterson, who began to kneel down so that he could put his feet on the top round when it reached him; but just as he was feeling for it the ladder, held on its foundation of insecure human muscle, swayed, slipped, and went crashing to the ground where one of its sides snapped like a pipe-stem.

When the spectators saw what had happened, a murmur of horror passed their lips. There seemed nothing now but death for the boy who clung desperately to the window thirty feet above them. There was no other ladder, and apparently no human help. By this time the fire had eaten a hole in the roof, and was shooting merrily through, lighting the whole place up with a bright glare. Evidently, too, it had eaten through the door of Patterson's study, for little puffs of smoke began to appear at the end windows of the study, and a glare filled the room.

The Wee One begged piteously for help, and then, turning, looked into the room he had just

left. Then he turned his face to the ground, and made a movement as if to jump.

"Don't jump, don't jump, don't jump!" yelled the crowd in chorus. "Here's a rope for you." Mr. Parks now appeared with a coil of stout rope and threw it with all his might at the window. It didn't quite carry up to it. Frantically he snatched it up again and threw. This time the unwinding end dropped across the window sill, hung a moment and slipped back before Patterson could grasp it. Mr. Parks tried again, but this time failed to get the rope near the window.

"Let me have it," said a calm voice at his elbow. "Let me try." It was David. All looked at him in open-mouthed astonishment. "I can't throw it, I'll carry it."

"How?"

David pointed to the great woodbine vine which, with its stout stem, crept over the whole end of the building. It had been planted many years before. Unmolested its tendrils had shot their way into the crevices between the bricks, making a kind of lattice work. "There's a chance," he said, "and I'll try. It's the only way

to save him. Quick, tie the rope around me and help me to the wall."

Willing fingers knotted the rope around his waist, and bore him to the wall, the crutches dropping from his hands. They pushed him up the wall as far as they could, and then let go. Up that mat of woodbine vine David went like a monkey, the tail of rope dangling out behind. Where the growth was large he seemed to have no difficulty, but as he advanced there was less grip for his hands, and once he stopped ten feet below the window where the Wee One was hanging.

"He can't make it, he can't make it," moaned the crowd.

But the little hero is only momentarily balked. Holding his weight with one hand, he tears loose a section of the vine to get a better grip, drives his bleeding fingers in between the vine and the bricks, and goes on. Now he is only a few feet below the ledge. Now he has reached it, thrown a hand over it, and climbed onto it. The crowd below are as still as death, but David works with a coolness worthy of the trained fireman. They can even see him smile a little at the Wee One, evidently encouraging him. Then he has slipped

into the room, made a hitch securely to the bed leg, which is near the window, and handed the Wee One the rope.

There is not a whisper as the Wee One takes it, gets a coil of the rope around his arm and another around his leg, and begins to slide. Below someone is holding the rope out from the wall so he will not tear himself on the bricks and vines, and almost before it is realized he is standing on the ground beside them, safe and sound, excepting a few bruises where he came in too close contact with the wall.

And now over the window ledge slides David. He is at home on a rope, thanks to his practice in the gymnasium, and it is but a small trick for him to slip down its length. And what a cheer bursts from the crowd as he is grasped in the arms of his friends! He is carried bodily, like a baby, by half a dozen fellows to one of the Senior apartments over in Honeywell Hall, where the Wee One has already been taken, and the school, forgetting the fire in the wonderful act of bravery, follows at his heels, shouting his name.

In an hour it was all over. The volunteers forced their way up the stairs, got to the fire

which had originated in the air shaft, and succeeded in dampening it with water and chemicals so thoroughly that it was soon under control. Patterson's room was pretty badly burned out, and the roof at that point was burned off. But no lives were lost, thanks to David.

CHAPTER XXIII.

A CHALLENGE FROM WARWICK.

"They are making a great deal of fuss about nothing," said David, the day after the fire. "I'm sure it wasn't half as hard as it would have been to climb a rope that distance. The vines gave me a great grip."

David and Frank had just come across the yard from luncheon, and everywhere they were greeted with friendly nods from the members of all classes.

"That lame fellow is the one who saved Patterson last night," spoken in low tones, was frequently heard as the two went along. In the class-room, the boys and the teachers themselves applauded David's action until he felt like running away and hiding.

"I did nothing much anyway," he would say, blushing.

That morning old Doctor Hobart sent for David, and David was embarrassed by his praise.

"You did a fine thing, young man, a noble thing. We will not forget it. You do not look strong enough to perform the feat. I myself saw you when you were half way up the wall. I'm not sure I should have allowed you to go up had I seen you when you began your attempt. Where did you get that strength, for it must have taken a great deal?" and the old gentleman bent forward in his chair and scrutinized kindly the slender boy.

"I wanted to be able to do something for the school besides my lessons and the only thing I could do was something for my hands and arms. I've been working mornings at the gymnasium, rope climbing and taking exercise on the parallel bars."

"O, I see," said the Doctor. "Well, the good Lord just brought you here. It is most fortunate that you had developed yourself as you did, for I doubt if anyone else could have had the strength, to say nothing of the courage, to do it."

"But he was my friend, and I had to do it when the ladder broke."

"Well, it was a brave thing and we will remember it. I will take pleasure in giving the

facts of your action to your father, Colonel Powers."

The only one who did not credit David with anything extraordinary was Dixon. He made light of the whole thing.

"No wonder he could climb, he has no legs to speak of. Patterson wouldn't have jumped or fallen anyway." This argument was meant to end it, but although he was with his cronies, he had not much support in this view.

The fire and rescue were the talk of the school for several days, but the ice was good and the river sports took the attention of the active-minded boys, much to David's rejoicing. Afternoons were devoted to hockey, racing, fancy skating and just plain skating.

Warwick had sent down her best seven with Channing at its head, and challenged Dixon's team to a game. A temporary rink of boards was hastily put up with the assistance of the school carpenter. Posts were let through the ice and firmly driven into the mud at intervals of every eight feet, and on these were nailed boards to the height of nearly three feet. The boards made a firm barrier for the puck. Dixon and his teammates had practiced every minute, but when the

test with Warwick came the latter wily individuals carried away the honors.

It was a sharp game, but the team work which had been shown in the football game the previous month was again apparent in the game on the ice, and it bore down all obstacles. And Dixon's team was not really as strong in opposing Warwick as in football. They were not together. Twice, by sheer force and rough tactics, they got the puck past the Warwick goal-tender, but this was all. Warwick scored seven times by pretty passing and elusive dodging. As the game began to go against Queen's the latter tried rougher and rougher tactics, but they only opened their defence more and more, and Warwick piled up the tallies.

"Is that the best hockey team you can get in Queen's?" asked a Warwick boy who was watching the game. "We have at least three teams that could take that aggregation into camp."

The Wee One, who was standing with Frank, Jimmy and a group of Freshmen just at that point, answered him: "No, we have at least half a dozen that could trim it."

"Well, why on earth don't you have them play? Those fellows, with the exception of your left

forward, and Dixon there, can hardly stand on their skates, let alone play the game of hockey."

"You see the captain has lots of friends, and he plays whoever he wants to on his team. The good players don't happen to be friends of his, so they don't play. See the point?"

The Wee One had recovered from his scare at the fire, and while he had been very friendly with Frank and David from the very first, he was with them most of the time now. He hadn't said much to David, but his eyes spoke volumes of regard and affection for his rescuer.

"Well," said the Warwick boy, "it's no fun to win a game like that. Since hockey is a closed sport to the best players down here, I'm going to try to get Channing to challenge Queen's to a series of races before this good ice gets away from us or a big snow storm comes on. Dixon couldn't keep the good skaters out of such races, could he?"

"No," said the Wee One, "not if the challenge came to all the school. He probably wouldn't go into it at all since he couldn't run it."

"Good—then I'll get after Channing. The way to do it would be to have tryouts in both schools and let the fastest skaters meet."

The boys agreed that it would be a great plan, and promised their aid.

"You'll enter, won't you, Jimmy, and you, Frank?" said Patterson.

"Sure," was the answer.

"Get Channing to send a challenge to the whole school," continued Patterson. "Have him send it to Mr. Parks, who is a friend of the school athletics and always willing to help."

The hockey game had ended by this time, and the triumphant Warwickites went back up the river shouting a song of victory which did not strike pleasantly on the ears of the defeated Queen's team. It had been customary for the teams to cheer each other, but Dixon and his players had climbed out of the rink without a word, taken off their skates and gone sullenly to the gymnasium.

True to his word, the Warwick boy, who had proposed the ice carnival on the afternoon of the hockey game, took the matter to Channing, and that young man was eager for it.

"We've beaten Queen's in baseball this year, football and hockey, and we'd beat them if they had basket-ball, and we'll clean them up on the

ice races. We can beat them at anything from tiddle-de-winks up to throwing the javelin. They have a society down there which runs athletics, and until they get over that disease the best fellows in the school are not allowed to play. That hockey game this afternoon was a joke."

Channing got to work at once and spread the proposed plan about Warwick. It was eagerly taken up, and the result was the following challenge in the morning's mail:

"To Queen's School:

"Warwick School challenges you to a series of ice races on the Wampaug river on Saturday of this week. We propose a half-mile race, a hundred-yard race, and a mile race,—all to be skated straightaway, without turns—each school to hold its trials and present only its best skaters in these events. The racing to be open to everyone in each school, and the entrants are to be chosen only on merit.

"(Signed) ROBERT CHANNING,
"For Warwick School."

Mr. Parks, thoroughly in sympathy with anything which was in the nature of a good, clean contest, particularly when it was on such a broad basis, was heartily in favor of the movement for a competition, and posted the letter conspicu-

ously on the bulletin board in the gymnasium vestibule.

The letter attracted much attention, and every boy in Queen's who could skate, or thought he could, entered his name on a long sheet of paper which Mr. Parks put there for that purpose. Of course, Frank, Jimmy and Lewis were entered. Their names were among the first to go down in their class.

On the shining ice just below Queen's a measured course was laid off by Mr. Parks, and the boys who intended to skate did their practising there. The course for the contest was to be laid equi-distant from each school so that there would be no favor to either, and where the ice was not so much cut up as it was near the schools.

That evening Jimmy and Lewis dropped into Frank's room to talk it over. They had all been out on the ice trying the various distances. Lewis thought his distance was the hundred yards.

"All you have to do in that," he said, "is to take one big breath and let 'er go. I think I made the best time over that distance."

"You did like fun," said Jimmy. "You were half way down the course when I started and I

passed you before we got to the finish. If Channing had suggested a ten-yard dash, I'd have bet on you, Lewis. As it is, I don't think you'll do better than tenth in the hundred."

"I wish I had a decent pair of skates," said Frank. "These old ones of mine are too small for me, and when I get to going fast they don't run well. I guess it's because they haven't enough bearing surface on the ice."

"What are you going to enter, Frank?" asked David.

"Seems to me," said Frank, "that the half mile is my best distance. I can't get going in the hundred. Jimmy goes the hundred like a breeze. And the whole mile is too much for me. If I had a longer pair of skates I could do better, but there's no time to get any so I'll have to do with these."

"Wheeler has entered in the half mile, I see," said Jimmy, "and he's a terror. Not particularly graceful, but he's as strong as a bull. Have you noticed that Dixon hasn't entered any of the races?"

"I was looking for his name, but it isn't on the list. Just the same, he was out practising this afternoon."

"I didn't see him," said Frank. "What was he working at?"

"The half mile," said Lewis. "He didn't come out till after you left the ice, and I think he's down there now. I met him and some of his cronies when I was coming over here, and they had their skates. I think he's after your scalp. And he's mighty fast on his skates, too."

"Well, I wouldn't be afraid of him the least little bit if I had skates that fitted me. Maybe I can borrow a pair, but it's not likely, as every one who can stand on skates will be out on the day of the races. I'll do the best I can with what I've got. But maybe he won't enter since he can't run it to suit himself. Mr. Parks, you know, has taken charge of the whole thing, and he, with a Warwick School teacher, is going to be judge at the finish line."

"That sounds good to me," said Jimmy; "there will be no monkey business about it now. It will be a fair race and no favors to anyone, and the fastest wins. I sent my skates to the grinder to-day, and they are as sharp as a razor—too sharp for the best skating. I'll have to take the edge off a little with emery cloth. When they're too sharp they grab the ice too hard, and don't slip easily."

On Thursday came the trial for Queen's School. Mr. Parks was in charge, and saw to it that everything was fair and square. Ten boys lined up for the hundred yards. At half the distance four went out in front. Jimmy was second and going well. Hillard, of the eleven, led by a yard or two, but coming to the very end Jimmy put on a great burst of speed and overhauled him. The two crossed the mark together, breast and breast. A fellow named Robbins was third. The other seven were strung along over a distance of ten or fifteen yards. Lewis was last. He crossed, grumbling because his "old skate" was loose.

"If it hadn't been for that I'd been second at least," he told Jimmy, as they skated back to the starting line. Lewis always had excuses, and most of the time he believed them himself.

Next came the half mile race, which brought out seven fellows, among them Frank. Just as the skaters were getting set for the start, Chip Dixon glided over to Mr. Parks. "I've entered," he said, "and want to start."

"When did you enter?" said Mr. Parks. "I didn't notice your name."

"I put my name down this afternoon; didn't think I could skate till just now because I had a bad knee where a puck hit me."

Mr. Parks looked undecided. He did not like Dixon, and was convinced that he had held off till the last moment deliberately so as to spring himself as something of a surprise, and maybe gain some advantage in it. So he turned to the row of skaters, who were standing on the mark and put the question to them:

"Are you willing he should enter the race, boys?"

Chip's unpopularity showed itself in the hesitation of the fellows in speaking up. They shuffled from one foot to the other. Finally Frank spoke up:

"I have no objection. I'd like to have him in."

It was a challenge to Chip, and Chip knew it, for he shot a quick glance at Frank and his black eyes snapped. The others now agreed, following Frank's lead, and Mr. Parks ordered Dixon into line. He jumped into place and at a signal they were off. It was something of a rush at first as the fellows were a little too close together.

Whether it was accident or not, Dixon jostled

the fellow next to him, who, in turn, got in Frank's way and almost threw him. Hoppin went down in a heap and Frank had to skate outside of him to avoid a tumble. When he was clear of Hoppin he was the tail of the bunch. But he settled down to work determinedly, and at half the distance had overhauled three of the stragglers. Dixon, Wheeler, and a lad named Tompkins were still leading, with the former well ahead of the others. Slowly Frank crept up, still reserving a little for the sprint at the end. He passed Tompkins, and was even with Wheeler a hundred yards from the finish. Then he began to put his best speed into it. He passed Wheeler, but, despite everything, he could not quite reach Chip, who shot across the finish line six feet ahead of him. As they snubbed themselves with the heels of their skates, Frank and Chip came close together and Frank caught Chip's triumphant glance which had a sneer in it as well.

"Never mind, old fellow, you get in the heat to represent the school anyway," said the Wee One to Frank a little later. "Second place is just as good as first place. That lets Dixon, you, and Wheeler in to represent Queen's in the half-mile."

"How did Chip come to get so far ahead of you? We were up at the curve waiting for you, and we thought you had surely dropped through a hole in the ice. There was nothing to it but Dixon. And then you began to come, but it was a close squeeze. What was the matter?"

"Oh, some one got in Dixon's way and Dixon ran into him and knocked him into my way, and I nearly fell over him and lost ten yards on account of it."

"I'll bet a pair of my best socks it wasn't an accident. Hoppin and Chip are great friends. I'll bet it was all cooked up to throw you."

"I don't believe it," said Frank. "He wouldn't be as mean as that. I haven't hurt him." But the Wee One held his own opinion.

The mile heat trial brought out some good racing, and Hasbrook was the victor. Connor and Day finished second and third. They were two Juniors who were not identified with any athletics, but they showed themselves capable of making a good race.

At the gymnasium, after the trials, the names of the candidates were posted prominently as follows:

100 yards—Turner, Hillard, Robbins.

Half-mile—Dixon, Wheeler, Armstrong.

Mile—Hasbrook, Connor, Day.

"And now," said the master, "I have a little announcement to make. I have just sent this information to Warwick, also. You will be pleased to learn that there are to be three very handsome cups for the winners of these three events. They are to be suitably engraved and awarded after the races. I assure you they are very handsome trophies, and the winners will not only bring honor to the school, but will have something to remember the event by. The giver of the cups is our young friend, David Powers."

There was a spontaneous cheer for David, and all turned to look for the individual just named, but he had beaten a hasty retreat when Mr. Parks began his remarks, and was even now cutting for his room as fast as he could go.

CHAPTER XXIV.

A GIFT AND A THEFT.

In Frank's room that night there was a conference. The Wee One was giving his advice about how a skating race should be won. It was his notion that one should lay back of the leader, let him cut out the pace, and then beat him out just before the finish.

"I don't agree with you at all," cried Jimmy. "In the hundred anyway, you can't lay behind. You have to dig in for everything that's in you right from the start. I'm going to plan to go as fast as I can all the time, and get going as fast as I can as soon as I can."

"And I guess in my race I can't do much laying back either," said Frank. "Channing is entered in that half-mile for Warwick, and he has a long, powerful stroke. I was noticing him the other day. He goes like a breeze, and never seems to tire. And then there's Chip. I don't think I can beat either one of them. No, Mr.

Patterson, I'm going to skate for all I'm worth all of the time, like Jimmy. If I only had a pair of skates that fitted me I'd have a better chance, but as it is, I'm afraid if Queen's wins, Chip will have to do it, for Robbins isn't fast enough to get away with Channing."

"Well, I'd rather see Warwick win than Chip," said the Wee One vindictively. "I'm going to pin my colors on you, Frank, and you've got the speed if you can last the distance out."

"I'll do the best I can," said Frank, "and if I can beat Dixon I'll be thankful, because he has stepped on me every time he got a chance since I came. And it's natural that I should want to get back at him somehow."

"Why didn't you get a pair of skates to fit you, anyway?" said the Wee One.

"Well, in the first place I didn't have the time, and in the second place I didn't have the price. The kind I want are those Ruddock skates, those long, thin, light ones with plates that screw to the soles of your shoes. Both of them put together would only weigh half a pound. And they cost money, my son," added Frank. "I'll have six pairs when I'm a millionaire. I'll have to do for Freshman year on my old Christ-

mas present of two years ago. Now I'm going to ask you fellows to skip. I've got a lesson to prepare, and I'm going to get a good, big sleep to-night and then another good, big one to-morrow night and then I'll be ready for the fray."

"All right, Mr. Athlete," said the Wee One. "That means, Jimmy, that we are chucked out. Good night."

Frank was early in bed for he was determined to put all the chances there were in his favor. He slept like a top and was only aroused by David who was up uncommonly early.

"Going to take a little walk," said David; "it's early yet. See you later."

Frank was not through his ablutions when there was a knock at the door, and a messenger appeared with an express package. It was done up in stiff, grey paper, and inside the outer wrapping was another, and inside that an oblong paper box. When he got down to the box and opened it there lay a beautiful pair of Ruddock skates with long, thin, straight blades, the very things he had been wishing for. Inside was a card and on the card in script the name:

"Mr. John R. Powers."

"This is David's work I'll bet a dollar, and that's the reason he dug out of here so early. He knew they were coming."

There were tears of pleasure in his eyes as he tried the new skates on his shoes. They were just the thing in every way.

"What a bully fellow David was to think of such a thing"; and then at the thought of what he might do with them, his heart jumped—"They may give me a better chance to win," he whispered to himself.

Frank saw nothing of David till afternoon, for the latter had succeeded in dodging him, but finally he was cornered, and pleaded guilty to telephoning to his father the day the carnival was decided upon.

"I knew you couldn't do your best with the old, short things you had, and, oh, Frank, I want to see you win this race. Try them this afternoon and see how you like them."

"I can't help but like them," said Frank. "It was awfully good of you to do it, David. If I can't win with these I ought to be sent back to kindergarten."

And Frank did try them that afternoon, and they were all he could desire. The lightness was

a relief to his feet after the heavier old skates, and the way he went over the course made the fellows who happened to be on the river, open their eyes in astonishment. Chip Dixon was one of these, and he noted the flash of the new skates and Frank's increased speed. But Frank had no time to give to Chip's envious eyes. He skated back leisurely up the course, tried a few starts and then swung into a steady stroke down over the course again. Every one along the half-mile was watching as he flashed past, going at great speed, and heads went wagging wisely.

"Armstrong for my money," said one of the boys. "He goes like a bird."

Frank finished the half, sat down on the float, removed the skates and headed for his room. Remembering, however, that he wanted some books, he changed his course and entered the library. He laid the precious skates down on a bench in one of the little alleys of the library, the better to continue the search. He may have been five or ten minutes at the work in hand, but he found the books he wanted and turned to pick up his skates. They were gone!

Frank dived frantically into the other alleys where he had been and looked everywhere. They

were nowhere to be seen. He went to the desk and asked the librarian seated there, if he had seen "a paper box, so long, right over there." The assistants were called and questioned, but none of them had seen any such thing. There had been a dozen boys or more in the library, and they were coming and going, but neither the librarian nor the attendants had seen the missing package. Frank was heart-broken.

"Some one has picked them up by mistake, or perhaps Jimmy or Lewis took them as a joke and they'll be at my room when I go there."

But the skates were not at his room. Jimmy and Lewis were hunted up, but neither of them had been near the library.

"Was Dixon around," inquired Jimmy, "when you were at the library?"

"You're always thinking of him," said Frank. "I don't believe he's half as bad as you try to make him out. No, I didn't see him there, but I did see him on the ice and he saw the skates, for I saw him stop and look at them."

"Well, you can bet he knows something about them."

"I don't believe it," said Frank. "He couldn't be so contemptible."

At supper Frank confided his loss to David.

"I've got no luck at all. I shouldn't have let them leave my hands," said Frank in a passion of regret. "Serves me right."

"It is too bad, that's a fact," returned David. "But you must not blame yourself. It might have happened to any one. You couldn't keep them on your feet nor in your hands all the time. Don't worry about them. They may turn up, and if they don't you'll win anyway."

But Frank was inconsolable. He picked the old skates up from the corner where he had thrown them. They were as heavy as lead. He threw them down again almost discouraged, and all of David's cheerful words seemed to give him no help. He retired early, but had a bad night of it, dreaming that he was left far behind and that the crowd which watched him in the race yelled and jeered at him when he crossed the line minutes after the winner.

He felt better next morning, and still better when at about ten o'clock a big grey motor car rolled through the Queen's gate and set down at the head of the yard none other than his father and mother and Colonel Powers who had come up for the day. The Colonel had run up from

New York in his big six-cylinder "Crescent," and had stopped long enough at Milton to pick up the Armstrong family. Perhaps the parents only happened there on that day, but perhaps David's letter had something to do with it. Anyway, there they were. There was a reception in Frank's room, and during it the loss of the skates came out.

"They may turn up yet," said Colonel Powers, "but perhaps it won't make such a difference as you think."

In spite of the loss it was a jolly party which sat down at the guest table in the dining-room that noon. The term was nearly over, and it had been one full of interest and some satisfaction. Frank and Jimmy had to tell in minute detail of David's great climb to save the Wee One, who was later brought around to the table and introduced to the visitors, and he, too, added his word of praise for David who was well-nigh bursting with embarrassment. He had thought that everyone had forgotten about the incident as he himself had almost forgotten. After the meal was over the guests had to see the burned end of Warren which was now undergoing repairs.

In the course of the inspection David some-

how evaded the party, and when they reached Frank's room again David was not with them.

"Where is David?" Frank inquired.

"He was with us a minute ago," said Mr. Armstrong.

"Just dropped out of the procession," said Colonel Powers. "He's a little shy and did not relish being talked about, I guess. He said he was going down to see Henry, the driver of the car. They are great cronies. He may have gone for a little ride with him."

The races were set for two o'clock and it was now one o'clock.

"I must leave you," said Frank, "and go to the gym. I'd like to know where in thunder David is. I want to have him with me. He's so comforting, you know," and he picked up the clumsy skates from the corner. "A good place to see the finish of the races is from the shore road," he told them. "The road comes very near to the river just at the course."

Then in answer to the Colonel's offer to give him a motor ride to the racing course he said: "No, thank you, I'll skate up. But I wish I knew where David was."

"Good luck to you, my boy," called out Mr.

Armstrong as Frank turned to go. "Win if you can, but if you can't, it's no disgrace. I know you'll make a good fight." Mrs. Armstrong put her arm around her son's neck, and kissed him for luck, and Colonel Powers patted his shoulder kindly.

"I know you're going to win, Frank. We'll find David and bring him up in the car. Good bye."

Frank hurried to the gym where he found everything in a bustle with the men preparing for the great event. Every one was going. From the windows where he was getting into his jersey and sweater he could see a steady procession of skaters from down the river, attracted to the ice carnival between the two schools. But his heart was sad and heavy, and he felt slow and logy. He tried to shake the feeling off, but couldn't.

"I guess it's all up with me in that half mile," he thought. "I can't do anything with these things," kicking savagely at the old skates which lay on the floor.

But it was time to be going, and with Jimmy he walked to the float, strapped on his skates, and started slowly up stream. He had hardly a word to say all the way up, while Jimmy was happily

cheerful, and tried to work Frank into the same frame of mind.

In ten or fifteen minutes they were at the start of the hundred yard race where they found half the school crowding close to the course, and several hundred spectators waiting around. The crowd was every moment growing larger, and Mr. Parks and several assistants from both schools were hard put to it to keep the course clear.

Soon the Warwick representatives in the different events were on the scene, and as it was approaching the hour of two, the guards skated up and down frantically calling: "Keep back, keep back, the race is going to start right away."

Frank watched it all as though from a trance. He seemed to have no life for it, and no heart for the struggle which was coming. The skates felt like lead. And just now, to make him feel worse, Chip Dixon flashed past up the course with a brand-new pair of Ruddocks on his feet, smiling and confident.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE ICE CARNIVAL.

"All ready for the hundred yards race," called out Mr. Parks, who was master of ceremonies. For Queen's, Jimmy Turner, Hillard and Robbins, bareheaded and dressed in jerseys and knickerbockers with long blue socks, came to the mark, followed quickly by the Warwick trio,—Sumner, Perkins and Hallowell. The latter were easily distinguished by their gray jerseys and gray socks. They looked fit to race, and the Queen's contingent eyed them respectfully.

"Are the judges ready?" called Mr. Parks, who had decided to officiate at the start. An assistant dashed down over the course and answered affirmatively with a wave of a white handkerchief.

"All ready, boys," shouted Mr. Parks. "Start on the pistol." The six boys set themselves in their favorite attitudes for a quick start, and at

the report of the pistol, dashed off like the wind. Sumner and Turner went to the front at the first rush. Side by side they flew along, each striving for a few inches lead while on their heels came the other four bunched almost together. At the half distance it was any one's race. Jimmy had now cleared the rest of the fellows sufficiently, and was where he had a little wider space to travel. He bent his body almost at right angles to his legs, and drove ahead with all the power that was in him. Ten yards from the finish you could not have picked the winner, but in the last few feet Jimmy fairly threw himself forward and crossed a few inches ahead of his rival.

A yell which echoed far over the icy river and was thrown back by the distant woods, greeted the winner, and a crowd of Queen's fellows tore after him, patted him on the back and tried to get him on their shoulders; but in the effort some one slipped and fell and pulled all the rest down with him. Jimmy tore himself free, well pleased that he had won. He and Sumner shook hands.

"You beat me fair and square," said the latter. "No kick coming from me." They skated back side by side to the starting line where Frank hugged Jimmy delightedly.

"I knew you could do it," he said.

"Well, I'm glad I won, and I'm glad that you are more like yourself. When we started you looked like a funeral."

"I do feel better," said Frank, "now that we have one of the three, but I wonder what's keeping the folks and David. They should have been here at two o'clock."

"Clear the way, clear the way," shouted the clerks of the course, as they flew back and forth. "The mile race will start in a very few minutes. The skaters are on their way up the course now. Keep back and give them room!"

Immediately at the finish of the hundred, Mr. Parks had headed to the mark up the river, whither he had been preceded by the Queen's representatives. The half mile was being left to the last as it was considered to be the best race. It was to be the climax of the afternoon. While the crowd strained their gaze up river, the roar of a fast traveling motor car was heard.

"Here they are now," said Jimmy. "And, gee whiz, how they are coming!" The boys could see on the open road a big gray car fairly leaping toward them. Frank, even at the distance, recognized it as the one that had brought his parents

and Colonel Powers that morning. A smile lighted up his face.

"That'll help some to have David here," he said.

In a few minutes the car came to a halt on the road opposite them, and a voice called, "Frank Armstrong, oh, Frank Armstrong, you're wanted."

Frank turned and made his way through the crowd to the side of the car. Colonel Powers held a package in his hand.

"David is determined that you are to skate on Ruddock blades, Frank. When we were visiting you after luncheon, he took the car and went to Milton, searched the stores and duplicated the skates that some one stole from you."

Frank could not answer for the choking sensation in his throat, and when he looked at David the latter grinned back at him merrily.

"Get them onto your feet," he cried, "quick. You'll find the screw holes of the other ones will be just right for these. They are exact duplicates."

Frank could not answer just then, but he pulled the paper off the skates.

"And in case you didn't have any screws to

fit," continued David, "I brought some screws and a screw driver. Get them on quick." Frank ran to the river bank, and in a few minutes had the new skates firmly attached to his stout shoes. Then he threw the old ones down and sprang to his feet. How good they felt, how light, how different from the other clogs! He took a spin around on them, stamped his feet, and felt himself another person, fit to fight for his life, and, better still, to fight and win. His antics were watched with interest by the occupants of the car.

Jimmy's amazement knew no bounds when he saw how Frank was shod.

"David made a record run to Milton, ransacked the town and brought these to me."

"Isn't he a brick?" said Jimmy.

"They don't make many like him, I tell you."

"Well, you look like a winner, now; your face isn't so long as it was," said Jimmy. "I'm betting on you. Did you notice Chip Dixon's skates? They are Ruddocks, and they look mightily like yours. They are brand new, too. I wonder!!"

"I can't believe it," said Frank. "He wouldn't dare do it. But I thought he grinned sarcastically when I met him this afternoon, and he saw

my old skates in my hand. But maybe we'll surprise him yet."

"Here they come, here they come," shouted the crowd. Far up the river could be seen a lot of flying arms and legs.

"Warwick's ahead."

"No, it's Queen's; can't you see the blue jerseys?"

Nearer and nearer they came. Then it was seen that two gray jerseys and a blue jersey were in the leading group, while at some distance behind, the other three plugged along. But it was plain that a gray jersey headed the first group, only a few strides ahead, but still ahead; and as the struggling skaters came flying towards the finish that gray jersey seemed to lengthen out, pulling along with it the other gray jersey.

"Warwick, Warwick, Warwick," yelled the crowd. It was Warwick indeed, and all Warwick. Two of her skaters flashed over the line first and second, and the race was ended. It was now the turn of the Warwick adherents to expend their enthusiasm on the winner, and this they did with great noise and shouting. Morgan was announced as the winner, and escorted to where his

team-mates were resting on a pile of blankets on the boards on the ice.

"It's up to you now, Frank," said Jimmy, as Mr. Parks announced to the crowd that Warwick had won. "It's now one apiece, and a tie. The half mile race will decide it.

"And you, Mr. Frank Armstrong, have got to decide that tie," added Jimmy. "You look like a winner now. Come on, I'll go a part way up. I won't go all the way because I want to see the finish. I'm going to stand about fifty yards from the finish and as you pass me I'm going to yell at at the top of my lungs, GO! That will be a signal for you to put everything you have left into the business. Don't forget, put everything you have in you into these skates. I'll yell loud enough to wake the dead."

"All right," said Frank, "I'll be waiting, but I'll try to put all I have into the skates before that time. I may not be near enough up to get any benefit from your plan, but I'll be hoping." They were now half-way to the start of the race, and Jimmy turned back. Dixon sculled slowly past, and his face showed surprise when he glanced at the bright new runners under Frank's feet.

Frank simply nodded, and Chip coldly returned the nod.

Up at the start there was a testing of straps and skates and the tightening of belts, for on this race hung the school championship, as the six contestants well knew. Mr. Parks was very careful about the start. He told them that they must not cross-cut ahead of another skater unless they were well ahead. Such crossing, if not followed according to instructions, would constitute a foul and the one who committed it would be ruled out.

"Do you all understand?"

"Yes," came the answer.

Away down the course the crowd waited breathlessly, necks stretched and eyes straining. Suddenly the pistol's flash was seen.

"They're off," roared the crowd.

From the start of the half to the finish was practically a straight line broken only by a slight curve about one third of the way up the course, so that the skaters could be seen almost every yard of the distance.

On the racers came, the six spread across the ice in nearly a straight line. Big Channing towered above the others, a thing that could be plainly seen as the racers came sweeping along.

Next to Channing was Wheeler, then Frank, while Chip had the outside course. At the half distance Channing had forged a few feet to the front, not over six or seven at the most. Chip Dixon was almost abreast with him. Frank was skating third, but was moving easily. The others were beginning to straggle back, the pace being too hot for them.

The crowd was now yelling like mad, and the names of the racers were mingled by many voices.

"Channing! Wheeler! Armstrong! Warwick! Queen's! Dixon!"

On they came, Channing holding his own a couple of yards in advance. Do his best, Frank could not catch either him or Dixon. He felt that he might go faster, but for some reason could not make his legs drive any harder. On the skaters dashed and now they were entering the lane of human beings.

True to his word, Jimmy had wormed himself through the crowd, and was stationed forty or fifty yards from the finish line. He leaned far over to get a view of the skaters, and saw with dismay that Frank was behind. As they neared him he gathered into himself a mighty breath, and as the three flashed past him, yelled "Go!"

It was so shrill a cry that the spectators jumped from the very force of it. On Frank, the yell of his friend, the signal he had been waiting for and thought would never come, was as though a spring had uncoiled inside him. At the shout he fairly sprang from the ice, and in that one leap reached Channing who, at the rush of the boy at his left, turned his head.

Another leap carried Frank even, and then something like the power of a six cylinder motor grew within him. He must, he would win for the school. They couldn't beat him! And driving his legs like pistons, he shot ahead of Channing who struggled desperately to make up the lost ground, but without avail. Frank went over the finish line fairly flying, at least two good yards ahead of his rival. Chip in his effort to follow Frank, when the rush of the latter carried him past, put too much strain on his tired muscles, stumbled and fell, and before he got to his feet and could cross the line, a Warwick skater slipped across ahead of him. He was officially counted out.

How Queen's did yell! This time they got Frank up on their shoulders and lugged him up the course for twenty-five yards or more.

"Armstrong! Armstrong! Armstrong!"

"That was some race, I tell you," was the usual greeting between any two Queen's boys who happened to be within reach of each other, and then they fell upon each other, and embraced, pounding violently on each other's backs. Over in the motor car David was swinging his cap, and even the dignified seniors—Colonel Powers and Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong—were standing up, clapping their hands and shouting applause. It was a great finish to a great day.

The term closed on the following Wednesday and it was a jolly party which rolled out of the gates of Queen's in the big gray motor car bound for Christmas vacation and home. Colonel Powers, whose business had kept him in Milton, sent Henry and the car to bring the boys to town. David was the host now and he piled Frank, Jimmy, Lewis, the Codfish and even Wee Willie Patterson into the big motor. Suit cases were tucked wherever a suit case could stick.

It was a happy crowd that gathered around the Armstrong table that night for supper, for Frank had insisted that they must all come to supper before they took their several ways homeward.

And what a rumpus they made and what a chatter, and what stories of the doings at Queen's during that first term they unfolded to their elders. Mrs. Armstrong instead of being shocked at all the noise simply beamed with joy. Finally the leave-taking came and the boys parted with best wishes for the holidays and with great plans for the future at Queen's. And of that future of Frank Armstrong at Queen's you will hear in the next book of this series, entitled: Frank Armstrong's Second Term.